

RAY'S OF LIGHT





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TWO CHAPTERS
FROM
THE BOOK OF MY LIFE.

TWO CHAPTERS
FROM
THE BOOK OF MY LIFE

With Poems

BY
R. SHEPARD LILLIE



Mrs. Lillie M. Lillie

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This Little Work

IS DEDICATED,

First, To MY SPIRIT GUIDES, to whom I am wholly indebted for whatsoever of merit it may contain, while its faults are owing to the inability of my brain more perfectly to reflect their thought;

Second, To those who from the first believed in me so implicitly that, with unfailing trust, they followed me from the time when I took the first lone journey out into the darksome valley of uncertainty until they saw me rise on the hilltops of success.

R. SHEPARD LILLIE.



PREFACE.

ALL who are before the public to-day in the cause of Spiritualism, as its mediums of one phase or another, have had their own peculiar individual experiences, more or less interesting as representing the psychic phenomena of our time, and especially interesting to the friends of those who have been so privileged as to be the recipients of such experiences.

On being asked occasionally for a recital of my own experiences, I have given what could be orally conveyed to another. This has always been received with so much of interest, that, complying with an oft-repeated request of some of these friends, I have finally concluded to give a short sketch of my early life and mediumistic unfoldment, together with a few of the poems which from time to time have come to me from different spirit sources.

I feel that the best of the poetical works given by my guides through my instrumentality, have been lost; and many times I have felt that I

would give much if it were only in my power to reproduce them. The few found in this collection are only the stray ones caught now and then by some reporter present when they were recited; and they are printed here as they were received, as I found, on attempting in some instances to revise them, that such revision only marred the beauty of the sentiment. Therefore I give them as they are, —

Reflections from the light above
Which round my pathway shine.

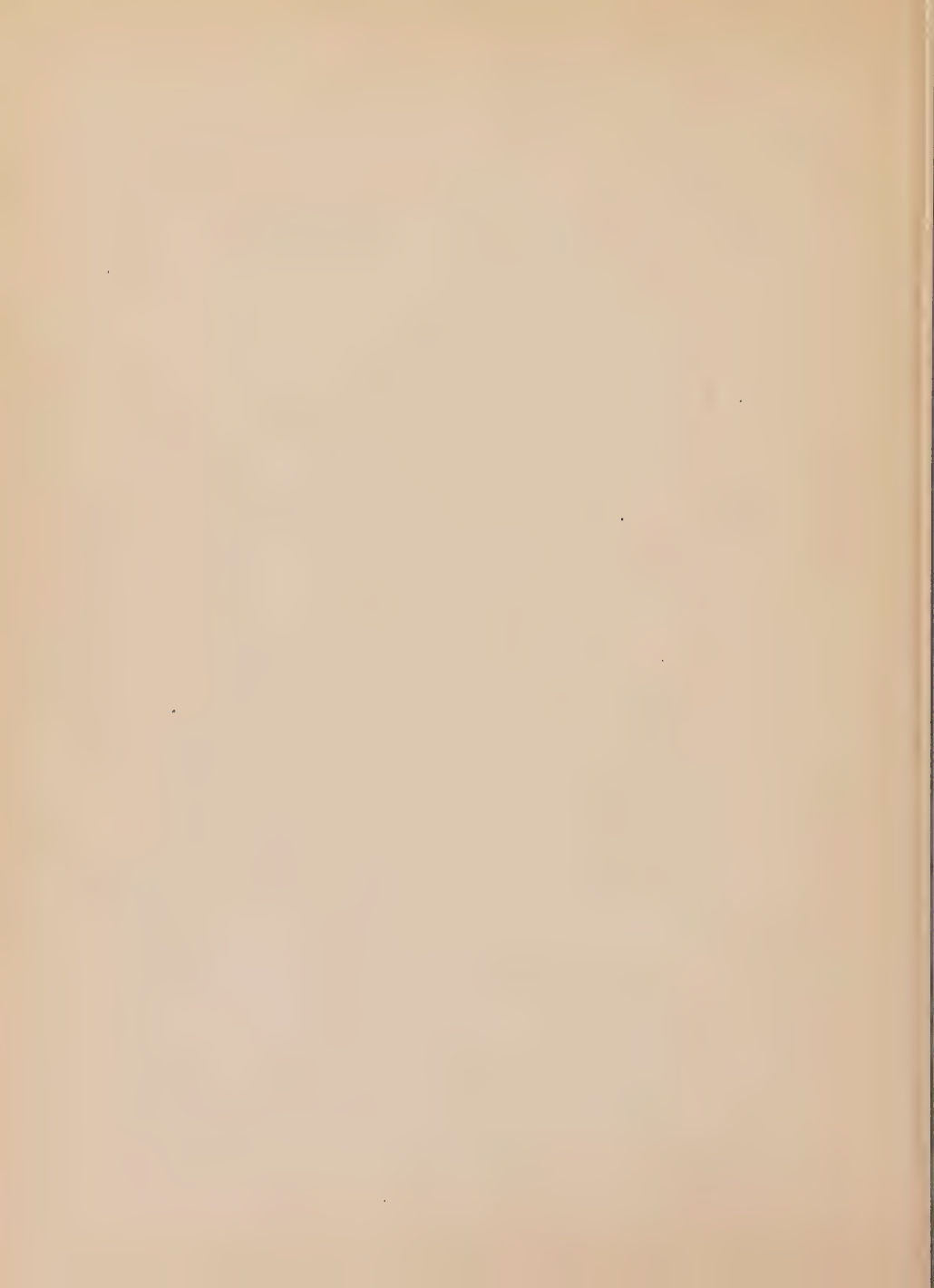
Before I had power to improvise, as now, direct from subjects given by persons in the audience, these poems were given me by automatic and rapid movement of the hand in writing. At other times I received them by the gift of clairaudience, or hearing the lines spoken apparently near me. But whether received in one way or another, such as they are they are the gift of the spirits, and in no sense my own, except as the instrument of their reflection.

And here let me say, that while this is true, I have found also that the condition of my brain as the reflector at any given time determines in a measure the quality of the poem inspired, — this being in accordance with the known laws governing mediumship. For instance, as something has

interested or awakened my mind in a certain direction, a poem has been given, — sometimes very rapidly, and finished at once; at other times a part only has been given, and I could go no farther until days and sometimes weeks had elapsed, when they would be taken up (on receiving, as I believe, another visit from the same spirit), and finished. I am not a poet by nature; at least this talent had never unfolded itself to me, nor was I aware of its existence, until the unseen ones about me discovered the talent in my soul, which by touching with their quickening power they have developed, and produced the results here given.

I will only add, that always on receiving these poetical impressions I have a sense of something much grander than my brain and lips can convey; yet such even as they are, I cherish them as rays of light from the spirit side of life. And to you, *my friends*, throughout the length and breadth of this land, who in my efforts to do the work given me by my Spirit Guides, have always met me with tokens of love and kindness, I send forth this work.

R. S. L.



CONTENTS.



I.

Two Chapters from the Book of my Life.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	I
CHAPTER II.	II

II.

Poems.

PRELUDE	57
MAN NEVER DIES	59
AN INVISIBLE CHOIR	60
THE YEARS TO COME	61
TRUTH'S ADVENT	62
LOVIE	65
THE SEASONS	66
INTRODUCTORY	69
FIRST CAUSE	70
AN ESSAY ON ISMS	74

	PAGE
THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE	93
AN ADDENDUM	101
THE ISLAND OF TIME	104
MY JEWELS	109
THE RULES OF THE SCHOOLS.	113
SABBATH LAWS	115
FROM KITTY.	120
TO MARION SKIDMORE	121
TO CLARA	124
THE SILVER WEDDING	128
IN SICKNESS	130
TO LOTTIE NUDD	132
LIFE'S MYSTERY	133
A DANDELION	136
TO A WILD VIOLET	136
SNOW	137
THE BIBLE.	138
THE WORTHY PROFESSOR	140
ON THE TRANSITION OF MRS. ELIZABETH WISEWELL	142
SEED-SOWING	144
BIRDS.	145
INTEMPERANCE	146
A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME.	150
A CRYSTAL MORNING.	152
THE MINISTRY OF PAIN.	153

CONTENTS.

xiii

	PAGE
EASTER	155
THE TUMBLE-WEED	158
THE GOLDEN SOMETIME	160
CHARLIE'S FIRST LETTER	161
AN IMPROVISATION	164
WRINKLES	165
"GOD'S FINGER TOUCHED HIM, AND HE SLEPT".	166
REST	168
DECORATION DAY	169
NANNIE	172
THE WARP AND WOOF OF LIFE	175
LITTLE CHILDREN	177
"ACROSS THE THRESHOLD"	179
LIFE TRIUMPHANT	180
A POEM	181
A POEM	183
THE CLOUDS	185
GIVE THANKS	186
BITTER-SWEET	190
HOW JOHN NORTON SPENT HIS CHRISTMAS	193
A VISION FOR LUNA	197
WHAT IS IT?	201
BARKING	203
DREAMING	204
APRIL FOOL	205

	PAGE
NEW FRIENDS	207
CHILDREN'S DAY POEM	209
MOTHER, HOME, AND HEAVEN	213
FAREWELL	215
TO MR. AND MRS. J. J. OWEN	216
OUR MOTHER	218
SOMETHING TO EAT	221
SONG TO THE MOUNTAINS	223
DEATH	224
CHARITY	226
GLORIA IN EXCELSIS	228

I.

TWO CHAPTERS FROM THE BOOK OF MY LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

OF my early life very little need be said. I was born in western New York, Erie County, on the summit of one of those rugged hills which abound in that region of the Lakes, where my father and grandfather then intended making a home. But the spirit of progress, which affected my father about the time of my birth, caused him to leave the old branch of the church called Presbyterian, to which he then belonged, and become a Methodist. This in his day was a change of religious association quite as much to be despised by some, as it is to go out into much more liberal denominations to-day. He, it is said, was an able orator; and taking up his new line of thought, he felt called upon to advance it. Therefore he left his home, taking his little family with him, and went to Kentucky, thinking to make a change in his worldly as well as unworldly interests, and

hoping also to be able to minister to the spiritual needs of those in that section. This work he began, but was only privileged to see opening up before him its possibilities as it were, and then, touched by a malignant Southern fever, he passed to the higher life. This was when I was two and a half years of age, and my only sister one year and a half my senior. A few more years passed, which, as I now recall, give me but faint and indistinct pictures of my mother's sweet face shining out through them, and we two children were alone, homeless, without means, and orphaned at seven. My mother's last effort in earth-life was to take us back to the old home "on the hill," toward which, when she found the end was near, she turned with such an earnest desire that she exhausted the last of a life-tide ebbing rapidly away, in order to reach it; but before she had completed the journey, her spirit took its flight.

I can never forget how, when having finished our journey around the Lakes, and arrived in Buffalo, we were met by friends of the family, who taking us to their home did everything for our comfort; how, as I now well recall, our mother seemed so bright and happy at being once more with old friends and so near her early home; how we little ones were put to bed for the night, feeling a sense of security; and how we were awakened

in the early morning and taken into another room, where we found strange faces and heard sounds of mourning, and saw such a strange look on the dear face of her who never before had refused to speak when we called out to her, affrighted! And this was death! After a few hours of hurried preparation, a messenger having been sent ahead to prepare for our coming, our sad funeral procession, consisting of two carriages and a hearse, began the long ride of sixteen miles which led to my parents' old home, where my grandfather still lived, and where my good uncle, — father's brother Henry, — his wife and children, received us with open hands, warm hearts, and loving embraces.

Here for seven years I found a home in my uncle's family, sheltered, cared for, and loved as they often told me, as one of their own. I am sure they conscientiously did their duty by me in every sense, for which I now pray the blessings of God's loving angels to be with them in their declining years, and so long as they remain upon the mortal plane.

As it is not my intention to dwell at length upon this part of my life, I will allow the following lines, written in the earliest period of my mediumship, to complete the story of —

MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME.

THE dear old home ! I loved it well !
'T was in the long ago,
When I was but a little child :
Is memory swift or slow ?

It takes me slowly o'er at times,
Each scene appears so plain ;
Memory reveals them one by one,
And I 'm a child again.

Far in the vista of the years,
In childhood's happy hours,
A desolated home appears,
A grave o'erstrewn with flowers.

Oh, Father, of thy life and love
My memories are few ;
One glance, — or did I only dream
That I remembered you ?

Remember too the lonely grave,
The sad and last farewell, —
Of him the only incidents
False memory can tell.

Thus clouded was my early life,
Flecked with its hours of pain, —
E'en as we hear in merriest song
The sad and low refrain.

Lonely and desolate at times,
At others full of joy, —
A veritable romping girl,
Or madcap, wild, tom-boy.

Nor beam or rafter or high tree
Around the old-time home,
But has a story it could tell
While absent I may roam.

And surely not a spot is there
But is remembered still, —
The garden, spring, and running brook
That sparkles 'neath the hill ;

The grape-vine loaded down with grapes,
The orchard standing near,
Such luscious fruit I 've tasted not
For many a weary year ;

The pear-tree nurtured with such care,
'Tween garden gate and shed ;
Just round the way the large white plums
'Mid roses white and red ;

The hop-vines running o'er the roof,
The lily by the door ;
Rover, the pet of every one,
And kittens near a score ;

The fire-place, the quaint old rooms,
The kitchen large and new, —
It seems I am a child again
As memory leads me through ;

The swing within the large old barn,
The mows well filled with hay,
The cattle wandering slowly home
At close of summer's day ;

The swallows' nests beneath the roof,
All well remembered too ;
The lane, the wood, the meadows green,
With fragrance rich and new ;

The berry-field — oh shall I e'er
Forget the joy to me
Of spending days within your bounds,
Gay, blithesome, wild, and free !

The gulf that lay behind the farm
Seemed strangely wild and bold,
Almost impassable it stood
Like fabled one of old ;

O'er me it threw a wondrous spell,
My fancies knew no bound ;
It teemed with life, and there I saw
Strange people gliding round ;

The chestnut grove, the old schoolhouse,
The church upon the hill,
The master ruling us so long
With stern and iron will ;

The schoolmates, too, oh where are they?
And echo answers, Where ?
Bearing alike with me, I trow,
Life's pleasures and its care ;

The uncle's house across the way
With children not a few,
And one embodiment of mirth,
Gay wit, and humor too.

Oh, Grandma ! can I e'er forget
Her lively, busy way ?
First to awake and last to sleep,
And busiest all the day.

So fondly caring for us all,
Her loving watch she 'd keep,
Silently glide from room to room
When all were wrapped in sleep.

I'm wondering now, did she return,
Oh could she, would she rest,
If she should find herself unfit
To work for those loved best ?

In memory rises now a scene
Repeated nightly there, —
Gathering us all with solemn awe
To hear the voice of prayer ;

Reading from out a time-worn book,
Divine I deemed it then,
Sacred e'en from the written word
To deep and low Amen.

But wait, fond memory ! let me rest
Awhile in pleasure here,
While I describe a tiny form
To every one so dear.

Of her so many things appear
In memory clear and bright,
So strange, so unaccountable
Her ways from morn till night ;

The queerest, quaintest things would say,
The strangest things would do ;
So wise, so old beyond her years,
The veriest tyrant too !

Another came, bright, fair, and pure,
A treasure to us given, —
Fair Georgia dropped to earth a while,
Since lured back to heaven.

O memory, cease ! I see a spot
O'erfills my eyes with tears,
For there they 've laid them, one by one,
Through all the weary years.

First 't was the form I loved so well,
Who gave my being birth,
And dying left me in this home,
Loved spot of all the earth ;

To her it held fond memories
Of happier days there past ;
Wearying of earth she turned again,
Life ebbing but too fast ;

For e'er she reached the quiet spot
She 'd longed and hoped to see,
A kind and loving friend had set
The tired spirit free.

Mother and grandma, aunts and friends,
The cousin blithe and gay,
Following each other one by one,
Have all been borne away.

Life is an ever shifting scene,
And scarcely can we trace
One vestige of the bygone days
Now in the old-time place ;

Strangers are seated 'neath the porch,
And standing near the door ;
But sacred memories of the spot
Are ours forever more.

CHAPTER II.

Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate,—
All but the page prescribed, their present state ;
From brutes what men, from men what spirits know :
Or who could suffer being here below ?

ALEX. POPE.

IN giving a sketch of my mediumistic development, it seems necessary to go back a little over the way which led to it.

By nature and early training of a religious turn of mind, I became influenced by one of those revival seasons which characterize Methodism ; and in my fifteenth year I entered that branch of the Church. Having been taught the essential doctrines of Christianity through all my life, I had no thought of doubting them at that time ; and indeed for many years I had looked forward to the event of joining the church as one which, being necessary to salvation, would in my case some day certainly take place. I selected the Methodist branch of the Church more, I think, from my affections (it being my father's church, and his memory very sacred to me) than from any knowledge I had of the articles to which I was

called to subscribe. Nevertheless, once entering upon the duties of my new relation and believing in them with all my heart, I conscientiously tried to live in accord with their requirements.

But the doctrine of the final loss of unconverted souls was one that to me brought an awful thought and greatest concern of mind. Those who were out of the church, and whom I held especially dear, I carried as a burden on my soul, often feeling how unutterably miserable even heaven would be without the companionship of those I dearly loved; and it was this concern of mind which finally led me through the door of doubt out of the church entirely. No sophistry of sceptics, no arguments of friends, nor aught but my own soul's questionings, did this work for me; for at last my reason began to work. On several occasions when the church was passing through a season of revival, I had labored for the conversion of one who was very dear to me. Vain were faith and prayers, however, to accomplish this much-desired end; and each time faith grew a little weaker and prayer a little less protracted. Finally, at a time when a special effort was making by a great enthusiast in the direction of a general revival, each member of the church was counselled to make some one individual a special object of prayer, — not publicly naming the person thus selected for conversion,

but in our minds always bearing this one name in silent and continual prayer to God; and we were assured by our counsellor that he had never known this means to fail. I can but smile now as I recall that experience, which at the time was so solemn and impressive to me. The revivalist succeeded in arousing in me such faith in his methods that for six weeks, without faltering, I worked, prayed, and watched, really expecting, night after night, to see the object of my prayers yield "to the power of saving grace."

The closing night of this revival rang the death-knell of my faith, hope, and trust in such means of conversion, and caused my mind to awaken. Then I began to question if I had ever really had an answer to prayer; if anything had ever come to pass in my life in answer to prayer, which would not have taken place even had I never prayed. These questions found in my mind a negative answer. As I continued to think and question, my spirit rebelled. I said, "If God is what they teach me he is, then he has failed to keep his covenant with me." I had asked in faith, nothing wavering, and had *not* received; and I began to feel as a child feels whose parent has repeatedly promised it something, and failed to fulfil that promise. When this feeling came fully to possess me I left off my attendance on the meetings, except to listen to the

Sunday sermons. Of course my class-leader visited me to ascertain the cause of my absence. My answer was, "I can no longer consistently rise in the meeting and say that I am on the Lord's side." Shocked at this answer, the class-leader said, "Certainly, sister, you can rise and say that you love God, can you not?" I replied: "If I know my own feelings, this is n't *love* which fills my heart; I am disappointed and rebellious, and do *not* love God if he is such a being as you tell me he is, — although this, indeed, I am seriously beginning to question. I am now in fact all adrift in my mind; the church by its own methods has unsettled me. I can no longer accept that which my reason rejects."

The class-leader went away, and sent the minister to talk with me. A change in the pastorate of our church had taken place since the revival spoken of, and the new minister was a man of uncommon breadth of thought, considering his position. He said to me, "Have you made this a subject of prayer?" I answered: "I don't pray any more according to the old idea of prayer; but I have said in my mind that if I am wrong I hope God will lead me into the right. If he leads me back to the church I shall go; if not, I *never* will." Looking at me earnestly a moment, he said: "Sister, I understand your position. I shall pray

for you. God bless you. I don't believe you will go far from the right." This was the Rev. W. H. Webb, who then ministered to the Methodist Church in what is now East Minneapolis, Minn.

I scarcely knew for a time which way to turn. Occasionally I went to hear a Universalist minister; he, however, used the same book and claimed the same promises which had so utterly failed me hitherto, and so brought me no comfort. I speak of this part of my experience because some have thought that the sceptical ideas received from Spiritualism caused me to leave the church and doubt its teachings. On the contrary, the church itself made a sceptic of me, until I doubted everything, even the immortality of the soul.

A few months later, William Denton (bless his now arisen spirit!) gave a course of lectures on geology in the place where I was living, and his revelation of creation, based upon that science, gave me my first clear conception of a God working only through natural laws to create a world, to people it, and to uplift a human soul. Now for the first time I knew why my prayers had not been answered. I now saw plainly enough that God was not a being who needed *me* to tell him what to do or when to do it. Closing his course of lectures on geology, Professor Denton gave one on the subject, "Does death end all?" Through this

lecture another glimpse of truth was given me in regard to a land of realities in the realm of Nature, belonging to the spirit of man as this belongs to his body. My mind was now as soil prepared for the seed, — in this case the seed of truth, — with a few of the weeds of error uprooted by my recent experiences; and the good spirits, ever waiting to know when a mind is ready to receive, saw their opportunity, and through a chain of circumstances, in which I now see clearly their hands at work, they labored for my emancipation and enlightenment.

Among my friends at that time there was one family of Spiritualists, by the name of Bartlett. The daughter was my most intimate friend; but we had preserved our friendship thus far by ignoring the subject of religion between us, as up to this time we were on this subject too far apart to come to any agreement. She of course became aware of the change of mind through which I was passing, and finally sent me a note of invitation to attend a "circle," to be held at her home upon a specified evening. I accepted the invitation, saying to myself, "I am going just to see what they do." The circle was composed of eight members. The manifestations consisted of table-tipping, answering questions, etc., and nothing particularly interesting occurred. However, I repeated my

attendance a second and a third time, and on the third evening the manifestations assumed a different form. It then became evident that I was the "medium," as they expressed it. Everything in the room seemingly became possessed with life; and a power, apparently working through my hands, caused heavy chairs to follow me rapidly across the room, and in fact there was no piece of furniture, however heavy, but would obey the slightest contact of the tips of my fingers.

This experience not only excited but quite alarmed me, and I made up my mind to have no more to do with the manifestations, thinking that there must be a force in them which I did not understand, and which perhaps might be dangerous to my health. I went home therefore determined henceforth to let them entirely alone. I could not, however, entirely suppress the desire to know more about this matter; and my hand still retaining the peculiar sensation after arriving at home which it had at the circle, I went into a room by myself, and soon found that whatever the power was it was with me still, every piece of furniture in my own room becoming animated as soon as I touched it. At last I went to bed; but my mind was so filled with thoughts of what had taken place that I could not sleep. Another new experience was also mine. My spirit sight was opened; and my room, from

floor to ceiling, was filled with a sea of faces, one face rising constantly above another. The faces of all I had ever known, and who had passed away, looked down upon me. I thought I must be crazy, or that this was the wildest imagination, and I felt I would give much could I blot out those three nights spent in those "circles." I lay most of the night with my hands resting on my body, being afraid to let them touch the bed for fear it would be shaken up, or walk off with me. Finally toward morning, completely exhausted, I fell asleep.

On awaking the next day I found myself in a more normal condition. Perceiving, however, that my hand still retained the peculiar feeling, I said to myself, "My hand moves everything else: I wonder if it would not move a lead pencil." Accordingly I took a large sheet of wrapping paper and went away by myself, not caring to let any one know that I was sufficiently interested to try this new experiment. Placing the paper before me, I let my hand rest passively upon it, resolved that not by any volition of mine should it be moved. Instantly, however, there was a rapid movement of the hand, which gradually settled into writing, in very large letters, first this sentence: "I want you to go to Mr. Bartlett's to-morrow without fail."

Here was a request showing intelligence, — a

request also in opposition to what I had resolved to do. The next regular circle was to be one week from this time ; yet this communication said, "Go to-morrow." Looking up to assure myself that I was alone, all the time knowing no mortal knew what I was doing, I addressed the intelligence audibly, asking, "What for?" The answer came, "Because we seek your welfare." I said, "Who seeks my welfare?" A name was instantly signed, — "Nancy Knapp."

This was my mother's name. In an instant a feeling of reverence came over me as if I were in her very presence. Knowing that I had not deceived myself; that some power outside of myself had moved the hand; that the intelligence could not be said to be in accord with my mind, as I had not previously had in my mind the thoughts inscribed upon the paper, — knowing this, I *knew* that I had received a message from an unseen intelligence. I had never ceased to mourn my mother's loss. When coming across some little reminder of her, or passing through some experience in life when I needed her — oh, so much! — I would have my days or hours of weeping for my mother, and had *never* felt reconciled to her death. This message before me had her name. The tipping table, the movements of the furniture in the circle and at home, all became invested with a deeper mean-

ing, — a meaning no longer dreadful or ridiculous. These were only simple means used to arrest attention. Ponderable bodies had been moved by imponderable forces; and now, in addition to all this, a manifest intelligence claiming to be my mother! And indeed was it unreasonable to suppose that having lost or laid aside the medium of the body, she made use of other material substances, however humble, to appeal to my senses of sight and hearing, and thus quicken to action my thoughts? The Infinite Spirit works through everything in Nature, — in the pattering of a rain-drop, in the mutterings of the thunder, in volcanoes and earthquakes. Why then should not these children of the Infinite make use of even these small means to lead us to a knowledge of the truth?

Thus thinking, I took the paper in my hand with all the reverence I had ever felt for the Bible, and said, "Now, if there is an open way of communication between that world where my mother lives and this, I will know more about it." Accordingly on Monday I went to Mr. Bartlett's, and told them what had transpired, and that I had been sent to them for some purpose unknown to me. They had been Spiritualists from the beginning, and knew what all this meant. With a look of surprise and delight, Mr. Bartlett

said to me, "I have been thinking more than a year that you could be a good medium, but have not dared to say so. What do you think they want." To him it was "they," the spirits. I answered, "I think they want to write; my hand feels just as it did yesterday." He took from the desk a blank-book with pages about the size of legal cap, and laid it upon the table. Again I placed my hand passively upon the paper. The writing this time was not in the scrawling hand of the night before, but about as a man would ordinarily write. In about an hour and a half the writing covered fourteen of these pages. Beginning as though addressing Mr. Bartlett, and speaking of me, the communication said, —

"I am her father. I have come back to earth to take up the work I left undone, and to undo some I had already done. I wish to give the truth to mankind as I see it now, from my home in the spirit world. Inside of five years I shall place her upon the public platform; meanwhile she will pass through various changes in development. The time will come when I cannot control her hand as now, and if she needs an earthly adviser I want her to come to you. In order to satisfy you that a spirit addresses you, ask questions, as you know she is entirely ignorant of the spiritual philosophy."

The answers to Mr. Bartlett's questions filled the remaining pages. In closing, the spirit said,

as to me, "Don't sit in any more circles; you receive too much animal magnetism there. The way has been opened; we will do the rest from the spirit side of life." In fact this message contained a prophetic outline of all the work I have done from that day to the present, although at the time it really seemed to us incredible. The spirit further wrote, "We will give you a sign, by which, if it be fulfilled, you may know the rest will take place. In a few days when you are least expecting it, we will throw you into a trance."

The days passed by until about three or four weeks had elapsed, in the course of which time I became clairvoyant and clairaudient in a measure, and so much absorbed by the new experiences that I almost forgot about the promised trance. In fact the prophecies and communication altogether were so strange and unusual that, as I have already intimated, I could—neither at the time nor later—scarcely bring myself to realize that the things spoken of would really take place. One morning, after a strangely restless night, I was for the first time taken under control by a powerful male spirit, who made me say and do such strange things that all around me thought I was truly insane. One of the strange things he did was to make me talk as though I were somebody else, which is a commonplace occurrence to a

Spiritualist. But when those about me disputed and opposed the spirit, manifesting their unbelief, he became almost boisterous, which to them in their ignorance was additional evidence of insanity on my part. And here was manifest the wisdom of my spirit father in placing me under Mr. Bartlett's care; for so great was the obstinacy of those about me, and their ignorance of spiritual mediumship and its requirements, that but for Mr. B.'s interference I should have been sent to an insane asylum.

Mr. Bartlett's watchful care for me kept him continually on guard, and feeling more than usually restless and uneasy that morning, he had not been able to go to his business before coming to inquire after me. He was met with the answer, "Oh, she is as crazy as she can be to-day; she has n't been herself all day; we can't do anything with her!" Mr. B. came into the room where I was, when immediately the spirit appealed to him, explaining as before who he was, and saying that he was preparing the way for others, etc. Mr. B. listened, and then turning to those about said, "She is n't insane; she is controlled by a spirit, — a rough and determined one to be sure, and yet it is all right. I'll go and get a developing medium." This he did, returning in an hour or two with a woman, who gave me a magnetic treatment, saying, "The

spirit has come for a purpose, and will accomplish that purpose and then go away."

It seemed that the work to be done was preparatory to putting me into the trance state which had been prophesied in the written communication. All who know me now understand that my present phase of mediumship is not the unconscious trance. This early phase, however, was a true trance state, and yet unlike in many respects what I have since witnessed in mediumship, where the subject or medium is placed in a state of unconsciousness resembling sleep, with the body in an otherwise apparently normal state, sometimes the eyes open and sometimes closed. Daniel (viii. 15, 16), says, "There stood before me as the appearance of a man, and I heard a man's voice, which called and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." And in the 18th verse he says, "Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face towards the ground." So I had before me, in this early strange experience, "the appearance of a man." In my condition of doubt and uncertainty as to a future state, to which I have already referred, the glimpse or vision of a life lying beyond death's door which had been given through written communication, with its prophecies, was vague and uncertain. My spirit friends no doubt had therefore said to some one, "Go and

make this woman to understand the vision." My father had said in the writing, "She shall in a trance behold wonders." And I have felt that this later experience was given to settle beyond a doubt in my mind the fact of our independent existence outside of these bodies.

The influence of the morning had been softened or changed by the developing medium, or my "control" had completed his part of the work; for a gentle influence led me to an organ standing in the room, at which I seated myself and began playing. The music seemed bearing me away. With it I heard voices. It was not the tones of the instrument alone, for these made only a weird accompaniment at best; but voices, celestial music, kept me reaching, rising, as it were, away from this my mortal body into distance so vast that it seemed immeasurable, while the music of the organ was like a faint echo of earth and time. Mr. B. had sent for his wife and daughter. My household and also some of my neighbors gathered in amazement about me, my body in the mean time having taken on all the appearance of death. My friends had taken me — or rather let me say my *body* in their arms, and laid it upon a couch, — the spirit holding control and giving directions, until all was arranged, and then apparently withdrawing. As for myself, *I* came and

went, independently of all this. I shall say "I," for my consciousness was with another body exactly like the one I had left, in every respect, except that in some things it had great advantages over the other. I could with my new body cleave the air; could pass through walls and traverse space in a way which with the old body was utterly impossible to me. At the same time I had lost all power over the old body, whose lips refused to do my bidding. I found also when in the room with my friends, in this new body, that in addressing them they did not appear either to hear or to notice me, making no reply whatever to my words addressed to them. Their eyes all the time were fixed upon the old body, so rigid, and apparently either dead or dying. They wept. I saw their tears fall, and said to myself, "I don't see why they cry. *I* don't care whether it ever moves or not." To me the other body was simply *it*, not *I*. I had used it, but it was not *I*. I had its counterpart, which answered me well enough, and I felt perfectly satisfied.

Friends, you may thus perceive that I know a little already of what the sensation is to be when we are freed from the body. No argument, no sophistry, from that time to this has ever shaken my certitude of the spirit's existence, independent of its fleshly covering. Saint Paul said in his first

epistle to the Corinthians (xv. 44), "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." He did not say there "will be," but there "*is*." I refer to Paul because some think the Scripture far more authoritative than any living human testimony. But for my part *I know* there is a spiritual body, without any further proof of modern or ancient witness.

This trance lasted about three hours. During this time I visited the spirit world, where I saw spirit friends my memories of whom had for the most part become dim and indistinct, and whom, on my return to the body, I seemed to have seen as in dreams. But a vivid picture of myself in this spirit body, which perfectly cleared away all doubts as to spirit existence, has ever since been in my mind. At the same time, what occurred around my mortal body in the room I for the most part saw and knew, remembering it better than any other one present.

Immediately after this trance I very rapidly became clairvoyant and clairaudient, so much so that at times material things seemed no obstacle to my vision, while I was continually surrounded by so many spiritual beings that I really lived with them more than with those upon the mortal plane. My mother was among the first who came to me. She had never been forgotten. The picture of her face

had always been kept enshrined in my memory, —aided no doubt by a good picture which fortunately she left us. With my father it was different. No picture of him had ever been taken; and as he passed away when I was only little more than two years old, I could not recall his features.

My mother came to me at first alone. I shall never forget that first vision of her. How bright, how youthful, how beautiful she looked! She had passed to the higher life when only little more than twenty-seven years of age. She was a happy, hopeful soul even when here amid sorrow, adversity, and many trials; but I cannot describe her as a spirit, with earth's shadows lifted from her pathway, and the hope of doing good to mankind illuminating her features. A light which we never see of earth was all around her, making the word "beautiful," as we understand it, give but a faint conception of what she seemed to me. And yet it was my mother, with the same features, only brighter; with her loving look and smile, her clear eye, her bright golden hair, and her sweet pleasant voice. On her second visit she had with her a gentleman; and stepping a little to one side, bowing as one will in giving an introduction, she spoke my name, and said, "This is your father." For the first time since the early days of my childhood, when I had seen

his body borne slowly away, I looked upon the face of my father. Both he and my mother had come from the silent land of the so-called dead. I saw them as I see mortals now, with my eyes open, and in the full possession of my senses. They spoke to me, and I replied. They said, "We have never lost sight of you or Lottie [my sister] through all these years." I asked why I had never been permitted to see them before. Their answer was, "Because your mind has never been prepared to look upon these things aright. Nor has the way been opened until recently. Other spirits have aided us in doing so now, as it is a mission which is to benefit mankind." A few moments only I saw them, and they disappeared as suddenly as they had come.

For a few weeks this new world continued to be opened to my view, and I had repeated experiences which led me out into a land of wonders, which was so real to me that I spoke of it continually, as one will of interesting events occurring in this life. I told of interviews I had with one and another who had passed to the higher life, — my mother, my father, my relatives and former neighbors, — how all had come back to me; and I found myself met with incredulity where my word had never before been doubted, with suspicious glances from my neighbors, which

told me that the distance between us was gradually widening. At last opposition at home, and ignorance black as night so far as these spiritual things are concerned, brought their natural results. Inharmonious manifestation upon the spiritual plane followed as the consequence of the inharmony on the material plane. Slowly a dark cloud settled over my vision, and my highly-prized spiritual gifts, together with my health, were apparently wrecked. Fortunately a band of spirits came to me about this time who understood my condition and how to treat it; and they soon brought me the necessary means to restore my lost health, and gradually to cement the broken chain of spirit control.

Two years of growth and development now ensued. One of the means of development I used, and which I feel like recommending to others similarly situated, was sitting regularly and for a certain length of time alone, communing with the silent and unseen influences around me, banishing disturbing and distracting thoughts, and making my condition one of complete mental and spiritual receptivity. This action is in reality the silent prayer of the spirit for aid from on high, and is far more effective than words can be. It is the kind of prayer, as I believe, which Jesus meant when he said, "And when thou prayest, enter into

thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." I do not believe that he thought words were necessary to prayer, for immediately following he says, "But when you pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking." If we give a little time each day thus to withdraw from the external world, and by aspirations from within reach outward toward the vast realm of Spirit, we shall find it not in vain, even though we seldom receive any visible sign or token pertaining to this life or the other. We shall at least always find that there is a rest and a certain amount of strength gained which will better fit us to bear the annoyances of our everyday life. For myself I can say that in these hours of silent aspiration I have received some of my brightest glimpses of the land immortal, and have seen for the first time some of the spirit faces that afterward have become so familiar to me in my work.

It was in one of these hours when my inner sight was turned toward the spirit world that there first came to me the bright pure spirit so many of you, my friends, know by the name of "Lovie," who has brightened my life's pathway, cheered me in many a lonely hour, brought me consolation and

solace, and who often at my request wings her way out from my home, visits some one whom I hold dear, and returns to tell me of their weal or woe, thus relieving my mind of a great deal of anxiety. This name "Lovie" is one that I applied to her before she told me who she was. Later she told me that she was of Indian origin, and that her name (and names with these people are of the utmost significance) was Kallawassa, meaning "shining water." She first took possession of my organs of speech after the interruption which has been referred to; and in her simple childlike way she opened the avenue for others to approach me with help and guidance. Among those who came to me first in the body as healers, influenced to do so by my spirit guides, was Dr. Mitchell of Minneapolis, to whom, with his ever-faithful spirit control, Dr. Roachman, I am greatly indebted, — Roachman's name becoming to me, as it has to many others, a synonym of wisdom and power. Dr. Mitchell and his good wife in every way strengthened and upheld my many times drooping spirits, and by help from above were able to prepare my organism to respond to the will of spirits even as it does to my own. In these silent hours of waiting there also came to me a Dr. Phelps, whom I never knew in earth life, but who has since become a tower of strength to me as a

spirit helper. Ponketo, a faithful Indian spirit, came to my assistance, as also an ancient Oriental spirit whom I now have reason to believe has guarded me ever since my birth. This latter spirit has an influence over my life which seems to me sometimes so powerful that I can only marvel at it. He is strangely prophetic and far-seeing concerning my own life, so much so that whatever he tells me is to take place I am as certain of as though it had already transpired, — so that I have many times requested him not to tell me my future unless it was to save me from error or danger. Wherever this spirit has led I have followed. I believe him to be the leader or the wise counsellor of the immediate band of spirits who work with me. What he has promised he has fulfilled, though not always in the time and way that I have expected. I find the spirits do not always estimate time as we do; or at least they do not always do things according to our time any more than according to our way, but nevertheless bring about the desired result.

In the communication given by my father in the beginning of my new career he had said, "Inside of five years I shall place her upon the public platform." A little more than four years from that time my public work began with a series of meetings in the place of my residence,

Minneapolis. These were only partially successful, owing perhaps to the fact that "a prophet is not without honor save in his own country;" but my partial success only served to inspire me with added purpose and resolution to gain a secure place in my calling, that I might carry the truth to all who would receive it. Such determination is sure to win; and I now go to my old home to be greeted with crowded houses, warm hearts, and earnest words of welcome; for

"Ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done."

A short time after the events already narrated, my work as a public speaker began. Starting from my sister's home in Iowa, I followed in every particular the directions given me by my spirit guides, even as to where to go in the first place. This implicit obedience to the guidance of my spirit friends I have persevered in from the beginning, and throughout my whole course, believing them to be much wiser than myself. And so far as mediumship in general is concerned, I believe this to be the only true way; for while the spirits are by no means infallible, they certainly can see farther and know more than we,—if they cannot, then they surely have no right to undertake our guidance. But if they

are wiser than we, then we can trust them unhesitatingly. For my own part, I have always found that this was a safe thing to do; and while in a few instances I have been disposed to question their judgment, in the end I have invariably been convinced that they were right, and that their judgment was fully vindicated by the result.

When starting out on this first tour of public speaking, those of my friends who knew how unfitted I was for such a task, so far as a proper education was concerned, could but have their doubts as to my success; and indeed they laughingly said to me, "Oh, you'll be back home, sick enough, inside of two weeks!" They could not fully understand that I too had heard a voice saying unto me, "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall say. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." This was literally true in my case: it *was* the spirit of my father and a few other faithful spirits who were leading me, and I feared not to follow where they led. For some good reason doubtless, those led by the spirits in these latter days—like those in former times—have to walk by faith rather than by sight; for much of the time we are almost obliged to obey the old injunction, "Take no scrip, no bread, *no money*

in thy purse." Many times during my itinerant work in the West—and unquestionably my experience has been like that of most others engaged in the same cause—I have received no remuneration, and no guarantee of any; going with my purse empty, or so near empty as to completely exonerate me from any disposition to violate the spirit at least of Christ's command; stopping at this place and then at that where there might be a small number of Spiritualists, speaking wherever I was called, as well as sometimes where I was not. This I did three or four nights, and sometime every night, in the week.

It must be evident to every one that this was real work, whether it met with immediate reward or not; it was literally hewing a pathway through a dense thicket of opposition, superstition, and lethargy; it was climbing step by step the rugged steeps that led at last, in my case, to success. I speak of this because so many mediums desiring and expecting to do public work, and who really accomplish work of great importance at last, seem to think that they must grasp success at once, and with one bound plant their feet on the topmost round of the ladder. I have sometimes said to those in whom I recognized much promise of usefulness, "Go forth boldly into the world. There are places all over the country where they need

you, and where the work you can do will be a means of growth to yourself and of good to others. Never let a price stand between you and your work,—that is, a stated price. The first thing you want is a place; if one does not offer itself to you, go and find or make one for yourself. The next thing you want is recognition; and if you have merit, and persevere long enough, you will gain recognition and deserved appreciation. These have what is called a market value, and when you are in the possession of these you can dictate your own terms.” During the first three years of my public speaking I gave not a single lecture on which a price was placed, but took what I could get, and worked on perseveringly, going here and there and everywhere, making myself at home where my work was, living in trunk, satchell, and shawl-strap, and sometimes so much in the latter that when I returned to where my *trunk* was, I felt almost as though I had a home with two stories and a basement!

If any one thinks such a life an easy one, or that its path leads always through sunshine, let him try it. The way of an itinerant in our cause is yet “up hill.” The number of our societies organized properly for work, especially in the West, is very small. There are more or less Spiritualists in every town throughout both East

and West, but they lack organization. However, as it is not my purpose here to consider details of this nature, I will only say that I have always found kind-hearted and sympathetic persons to welcome me wherever I have gone, and pleasant homes to receive me, and that these have left bright pictures on memory's walls.

Among the beautiful spirit experiences that have been mine, there are so many, and they are of so common occurrence, that it is very difficult to select from them for purpose of narration. I am constantly favored with clairvoyance; that is, the discerning of spirits. They come to me in my earliest waking hours, as well as in my latest; indeed, the first face I see in the morning is that of a spirit, and generally the last at night. I hear their conversation as I do that of mortals, in my room. These audible voices, as I understand it, do not come to me as mere brain-impressions, but through the usual sense of hearing, — by *clairaudience*, as it is termed. Little spirit-children often come into my room as would children of earth, bringing their toys with them (for they have these), and sit down together on the floor and play and laugh as heartily, and seem to enjoy themselves as much as real earth-children. Some days I am conscious of their presence with

me all day long, and sometimes they will come in merry troops to accompany me when I am going to some place where they are likely to see some of the "pretty things" belonging to earth. Once in a while they will come and go with me on a shopping excursion, and I will hear their childish voices commenting on the things they see, saying, "Is n't *this* pretty?" or "Is n't *that* pretty?" And sometimes they call me by name and say, "Oh, come and see this!" and I go; and many times I find it hard to keep from laughing at their bright and merry prattle,—which of course would never do, unless I wanted a large majority to think me really "out in the upper story." These little spirit children walk with me, they ride with me, and many times the words of the poet come to my mind,—

"Take, O Boatman, thrice thy fee,
For spirits twain have crossed with me."

My mother and father are daily visitors. I consult them about everything in which I need their council, just as I would if they had remained in the body. I do not mean by this to be understood as saying that they are always near me in space; but when I need them I call them to me by what I term mental telegraphy. For instance, when I desire to converse with them I concentrate my mind upon them and say, "Pa (or Ma), do you hear

me?" and in an instant, quicker than response by telephone, I hear the answer, "Yes, child, what is it?" At other times, perhaps, I say to one of them, "Can you come to me for a few moments? I wish to talk with you about something." If they cannot come immediately, I hear them say, "I am busy now, but will come later," — naming a time; and at the time appointed they are with me, and I talk with them face to face. As to their appearance, they nearly always seem to me much like mortals; that is, they look like them, and are dressed much in the same way, except that everything about them is of that ethereal substance which is both translucent and transparent. At the same time, so plainly visible are they that the color of their hair and eyes, the tint on their cheeks, and their smile are perfect and real to my vision, and even the texture of their garments can be seen with entire distinctness. So palpable and tangible have they appeared at times to me that I have felt sure I could touch them, and have made a movement toward them with intention to do so, when they have invariably stepped back or away just far enough to elude me, at the same time smiling significantly, — something I think as Jesus must have done when some of the disciples made a like attempt as toward him, and he eluded them, saying, "Touch me not."

I see spirits of all ages, — children, women, and men; those who have been in the spirit world for many centuries, and those who have more recently passed to the other life. Sometimes indeed I have the privilege of seeing those who are but just entering the spirit world, — as for instance, when attending a funeral service, as I often do. At such times I see and converse with the spirit just arisen, who perhaps lingers near with other sympathetic spirits, to pay the last tribute to the body which has been the companion of the soul during the earthly pilgrimage, and having served the purpose of a fleshly temple or tabernacle is now laid aside for the body that is spiritual and eternal.

I once witnessed the transition of the spirit of a little girl about eleven years of age. It occurred in Brooklyn, N. Y., in the house where I was then boarding, and where the child was living with its father and mother. The child's disease was diphtheria, and she was sick only three or four days. During the second day, when going into the room, I saw a spirit in pure white stooping over the suffering child. It was the spirit of a beautiful woman. I said (mentally of course), "Who are you?" she replied, "I am her mother's sister; I have come for Leila." Then she sat down a moment in a chair that was near, and wept as any of us would weep. Somewhat astonished, I said, "What, *you* weeping!

Why are you sad!" She replied, "Because this great sorrow must come to her parents."

This incident of spirit life does not confirm the old idea that the moment death comes we are either perfectly happy or perfectly miserable. The truth is that we are only perfectly natural; and it is the most natural of all things that we should feel sympathy for friends in sorrow. It is true that the spirits have a knowledge far exceeding ours, which enables them to see the good to result from this life's experiences, and thus their grief is robbed of the sharpness which touches ours. Still, they who love us sympathize in our sorrows and are pained on account of our misfortunes. Heaven is not to be attained in a moment, but by growth into those affections and dispositions which Jesus had in view when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." No doubt this spirit found more of heaven in ministering to this child and its grief-stricken mother, and in finally taking the child-spirit to a home which she had helped to prepare for it, than she would have in any amount of harp-playing and shouting of hallelujahs around a throne.

The next evening at about eleven o'clock, when a silent group were awaiting in another room the news of any change in the sick child, knowing it must soon occur, the father entered the room and told us that his little daughter had departed. The

mother, who was nearly worn out by watching, had gone to a room above, and was taking a little rest. On receiving the father's message, I went to the room where the sick child had been. During the last few hours of her life in this world the little one had been almost in a sitting posture in order to enable her to breathe more easily. As soon as the spirit had left the body, the form of the child had naturally relaxed and sunk down from its nearly upright position on the pillows. As all had left the bedside for a moment, I went to it and took the little head between my hands to lift it again to the pillows. This brought me in direct contact with her spirit; for spirits teach us that the last point of separation between soul and body is the brain, and touching the head of the child brought me therefore, as I have said, into immediate contact with its spirit. Being myself clairvoyant and clairaudient, the child's brain became the medium of transmitting her thoughts for the moment to me, and I heard her first exclamations of surprise and pleasure on beholding some of the beauties of the new life and world just opening to her spirit vision. First I heard her say, with so much of wonder in her tone, "Oh, what beautiful things I see!" And then with even more intensity of expression I heard her exclaim, "They say that I am dead!" — as

though some one had just made known to her the change that had taken place in her state. Then again, as if the same means which had opened the way for me to hear her words were also enabling her to see the scenes of the two worlds at a glance, — the scenes of the one mingling with those of the other, so that she could not separate and distinguish between the two, — her next words were, “And Mrs. Lillie is here too!” Simultaneously, I saw a group of spirits in the air, apparently hovering above and not far from the house; and I heard these spirits singing, being able clearly to distinguish male and female voices, and also the different parts they sang. I saw that they had the child in their keeping, and I thought I was to see her enter her real spirit home; but in an instant the whole scene had vanished, and I saw and heard no more. Turning hastily, I saw that my spirit mother was standing by my side, and I said, “Oh, Ma! where is Leila? I wanted to see her enter her spirit home.” My mother’s reply was, “She is upstairs with her mother.” It seemed that while I was having this experience with the dying and risen child, which could not have lasted more than three or four minutes altogether, the father had awakened the mother and acquainted her with what had occurred, and her cry of agony wrung from her by

the tension of that tie which exists between parent and child, had gone out to the little one and brought her to that mother's side. I went upstairs directly, to try and soothe the mother's grief if possible, meaning to tell her what I had seen and heard below. As I entered the room I saw the spirit of the child (in company with other spirits) walking around the bed uneasily, stopping every now and then by her mother's side and saying to her, "Don't worry, mamma," — just as she had said it again and again during her sickness, when she had seen the look of anxiety on her mother's face. I told the mother all this, and said, "They were bearing her away where she could rest and be so happy; *can't* you let her go?" Choking back her sobs, and making a great effort to overcome her emotion she said, "Yes, I *will* let her go. Go, darling, and be happy!"

Why can we not all try to look upon death rationally, understanding that to all souls it is gain more than loss, — and when it is inevitable, let our loved ones go out from us as we let our children go forth from our homes to school, where they will have advantages we with all our love cannot give them at home, knowing that though they are not always in our sight they will occasionally return to visit us? Then indeed the grave would be robbed of its victory, and death of its sting!

I have had occasional visits or calls from this child spirit during the years intervening since her ascension, and have noted the changes that nature has brought to her in her new home; so that lately when she has visited me, I have seen a young lady, almost a woman, in the place of the little girl. Thus it appears that in the spirit world as in this, all the fair promises of childhood and youth are fulfilled in manhood and womanhood.

Among the spirits coming to me from the other side of life have been representatives of all the nations of the earth and of nearly all periods of time, — all, or nearly all of them seeming desirous of benefiting and helping on the human race. Of course all who have had their spiritual perceptions quickened to the extent that they are able to see and converse with spirits, are convinced of the great truth that man lives after death; but beyond this general admission there is a wide difference of opinion among them as to *how* he lives in that future state, — what his condition and occupation are, and what classes of spirits are able to communicate with the denizens of this world. One person claims to receive intelligence from the wise men of ancient times; another doubts very much if those ancient worthies have either the disposition or the ability to communicate with mortals in these modern times. Again, one can believe it possible

that Socrates, or Plato, or Solon can return to earth, but if the name of Jesus be mentioned in this connection they are ready to laugh — or be horrified — at the idea that the great Judæan would or could do such a thing. But if spirit return is possible and true, as we Spiritualists claim that it is, then why should not *any* spirit that has ever lived on earth, and retains a strong interest in earth life, be willing and able under the proper conditions to transmit his thoughts to mortals? The age and wisdom or exaltation of a spirit, so far from being an obstacle, would rather seem to be a help to such communication. Spirits dealing with me have for the most part done so, I may say, in an impersonal manner; that is, they have treated of general principles, and of facts bearing on those principles, — often withholding their names altogether. In the few instances where they have tried, so to speak, to *personalize* themselves through me in a public address, they have found me not a good personating medium; that is, they have found it very difficult to express their personality in voice, gesture, manner, etc., through my individuality, and therefore have very seldom attempted it. This consideration of course bears more or less upon the character of the poems printed in this book. I can only say, in relation to this matter, that from time to time I have requested certain spirits to

come to me and give as best they could one or more poems through my organism. I ask no one of my readers to believe that they came at all. For myself, however, I am satisfied that they *did* come, and that they did what they could at the time through my instrumentality.

As touching the fact of the present relation of Jesus to this earth, and his immediate interest in the affairs of mortals, I will here relate a vision which I at one time had of him. Just previous to my entering on my public work, William Denton came to Minneapolis and St. Paul, to give a course of lectures. As I missed hearing him in Minneapolis, I went to St. Paul the following evening on purpose to hear him, intending to remain over night with a friend. While the speaker was walking back and forth delivering his powerful address, I saw several spirits of an order that I did not remember at that time ever to have seen before. They wore long robes after the manner of the Orientals. Presently, as I was wondering at what I saw, one of them stepped to the front of the platform and looked directly at me; and as if divining my perplexity he uttered these words: "I am he of whom they spake." Of course my mind involuntarily turned — as yours does, reader — to the great historical character of the New Testament, although he said nothing

further to indicate his personality. I turned over and over in my mind what this could mean, and on the way home with my friend I was thinking of it, almost ready to doubt my own senses. It was a beautiful, bright star-light night, and as I was walking along musing deeply, I involuntarily lifted my eyes to the heavens, and there in the air floating above me, and clearly outlined against the sky, was this same form; and I heard these words, and no more: "I am the son of man." Some may reply to all this that William Denton never claimed to be controlled as a medium. I know this very well, and moreover feel quite sure that if he had been told of this my vision he would have regarded me as laboring under a mental hallucination. It is not however a question whether Mr. Denton was consciously or unconsciously under control at that time or not, nor how far any one who is trying to do a good work for humanity is aided by wise and benevolent spirits; but the question is whether I really heard and saw what I claim to have heard and seen. For my own part I am certain of it. Again, some may say that if it were Jesus whom I saw, and he were disposed to help any one, it would not be a radical like William Denton. But according to the history of him, Jesus himself was certainly a radical and an innovator; and I cannot help thinking that if he

were to come and enter the church of this day he would go through and turn over some tables, and take a scourge and drive out some of the money-changers in it: ay, and not content with this would preach a radical discourse against form and ceremony, against pharisaical pride and dead literalism in the place of the power of the spirit, even as he did in the temple of old.

After reaching the home of my friend that evening, I asked her (she being an excellent clairvoyant) this question: "Did you see any spirits around Mr. Denton this evening?" I did not tell her what I had seen, but only asked her what, if anything, she had seen. She answered, "Yes, I saw several." I then asked, "Well, were there any whom you knew?" She replied, "Yes, I suppose I saw the spirit who was known on earth as Jesus of Nazareth." Here was direct corroboration of what I had seen,—neither of us speaking to the other of our experiences until we compared notes at home.

A case of direct and instantaneous healing by spirit power, of which I was the subject, has a further bearing on this vision. This was in the earlier days of my work. I was speaking in Binghams, N. Y., in Leonard Hall, and was entertained in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard for several days. I had been suffering from a severe

cold, which grew worse gradually, until I found myself one morning unable to lift my head from the pillow without dizziness, faintness, and all the premonitory symptoms of typhoid fever. Twice in my life I had passed through the terrible ordeal of this fever, and knew unmistakably what I had now to encounter. It is a terrible thing to be sick among strangers, no matter how kind they are,—and these certainly were very kind who had me in charge,—for the consciousness of the trouble you are obliged to give them aggravates all the other unfavorable conditions of your case. As I tried therefore to rise from my bed, and sank back upon it again through sheer weakness, I cried right out in my anguish, saying, “O God! must I be sick away from home and among strangers?” At this moment I saw a circle of spirits around my bed,—my father, mother, and others, some seven or eight in number; they looked troubled, as much as to say, “We have done all we can.” Instantly I saw, away in the blue vault above, the same spirit I had seen on that evening with Denton, and I heard these words as though spoken to my guides, “I will heal her.” Directly, distance or space seemed as nought; this spirit stood by my bed, laid one hand on my head, and then made a single movement from my head downward the length of my body, rising as he did so, and dis-

appearing as he came. It seemed to me that like a cloud my ills of every description rose and passed away with him,—it being as if some one had lifted a heavy weight of covering from my body and taken it away. Scarce knowing what to think, I immediately rose and dressed myself and went out to breakfast, never feeling better in my life. As I went out, Mrs. Leonard (who is herself a medium) said to me, “They’ve healed you, have n’t they?” I said, “How did you know it?” She replied, “Oh, *they* told me.”

I have had one or two other similar experiences, when it seemed to me I needed help greater in some respects than that the spirits immediately surrounding me could impart; and at such times I have received it from one who conveys this higher power,—leaving with me in each instance the impression that it was Jesus of Nazareth who succored me. And to me it seems no more wonderful that he should come than that any one who has been as long, or longer, in the spirit world should do so. I confess that on being healed in this way it occurred to me to ask why if Jesus could now so heal diseases, there should be so much unmitigated pain in the world as there is. As I thus queried in my mind I received this mental response: “I was able to reach you at this time through a peculiar condition held by

your spirit friends. At another time you might need me even more, and I should not be able to reach you at all."

I do not wish any one reading this to say that I claim Jesus as one of my spirit controls. I do not. But I claim this,—that the movement of Spiritualism is governed by the world of spirits, and that it is also the work of the wisest and the best. If I did not think this I should be fearful as to results; but believing—yes, knowing—this, I have no fear. When I have a real need affecting my spiritual well-being, and find it cannot be brought about by my immediate spirit friends, I ask any spirit above them who I think may be able to assist me. I do not do this by going on my knees in prayer; but by mind power I send out my request to the individual I desire to reach, and if he *can* render me assistance I am sure he will: if he cannot or does not, I simply bide the inevitable. I know there is no little dispute among Spiritualists and Free-thinkers as to whether such a person as Jesus ever really lived, some claiming that there is not sufficient historical evidence to warrant us in so believing; but while my mind is entirely free from any superstition in regard to Jesus, I think we are fully justified in believing on historical grounds that about the time mentioned there lived in Judæa one strangely endowed with spirit power,

and who now as a spirit in spirit life is wise, and in many respects powerful, — indeed, our elder brother and (as he so many times said) the “Son of Man.”

I once had an experience in regard to prayer which deeply impressed me. It was at a time when I was in deep sorrow and trouble, when it seemed to me that there was no friend near and no way of escape for me, when I felt that I *must* reach beyond my immediate spirit friends. Closing my door, and locking myself into my room, I prayed as of old to God, earnestly and fervently pleading with Him for help. Presently I was interrupted by a voice clear and heavy as that of a man; turning, I saw the spirit of a man close to me, as plain as though he were in the mortal body. He said, “Woman! you have prayed to God; you find yourself answered by a mortal. Is there anything I can do for you? You will find God works through law, never changing to meet the whims and fancies of men. Whatever there is in your life remediable, arise and remedy it. That which is not to be avoided, go bravely forth and meet it. You will find strength in effort, not in needless repining.” He had taught me a needed lesson.

I might go on indefinitely relating the wonderful and beautiful experiences that have been mine, but

I will close with the mention of one pleasant incident which occurred recently.

One morning, just before waking, I had a beautiful dream, in which it seemed that a friend handed me a lovely spray of flowers full of dewy fragrance which gave me exquisite pleasure. While I was enjoying them I awoke, and immediately heard a spirit voice as of one who had seen my thoughts even in my sleep, for it spoke thus of the flowers of my dream: —

They make me think of spring-time
Though winter is so near ;
They take me to my childhood,
Though now gray hairs are here ;
They make me think of Summer-land,
The true home of the soul,
Though I am with you here on earth
To aid you toward life's goal.
They make me think of you, dear,
In innocence at play ;
I see you in your childhood,
Which seems so far away.
Thus dreams of earth come to us,
As flowers fresh with dew :
May their sweet fragrance ever
Come thus in dreams to you.

Hearing the voice and not seeing the form, I said, "Who are you, — my father?" The reply was, "No, I am more than that; for he was the guardian of your body, while I am the guardian of your spirit."

Those who have daily such experiences as I have here related may wonder that I have taken so much space and time for my narrative. But all are not so favored; and it is for them that I have written. To such I give this not only as a chapter from my life, but as a fragment of the gospel of truth.

II.

P O E M S.

PRELUDE.

Go forth as messenger of light,
Timidly making your first flight ;
Go forth, and touching some faint heart
Encourage it to act life's part !
And if thou doest that, and peace
Shall with some troubled soul increase,
Then I shall reap reward divine,
And light around my pathway shine,
For sending forth these thoughts of mine.

Not mine, but what to me are given
From my strange visitants at even.
Strange faces look forth from my wall,
Strange voices often on me call, —
Sometimes from loved ones known in youth,
Who taught me in the paths of truth ;
Sometimes from strangers, nevermore
To grace my room or o'er me pour
The mysteries of hidden lore.

Sometimes I fancy I 'm alone.
Maybe these thoughts are then my own,
That fancy helps me at such time
To clothe my favored thought in rhyme ;
But just as I this power would take,
And to myself appropriate,
Out steps, as from behind a screen,
A face all hitherto unseen, —
As though a mist had been between.

And then again I read a name,
Sacred to history and fame,
Engraved in letters as of gold ;
And thus the secret I am told
That while we think them far away,
Not knowing what we do or say,
They 're nearest, — mayhap by our side ;
And thus the river doth divide,
Which seemed so deep and dark and wide.

'Twixt Death and Life, 'twixt Life and Death,
'Tis but a swiftly fleeting breath ;
'Tis but the drawing of a veil ;
'Tis but a sigh, a moan, a wail.
A little of suspense and wonder,
A misty veil that 's rent asunder,
A moment then of soul surprise,
And this is where the mystery lies,
That, though 't is Death, man never dies !

MAN NEVER DIES.

ONE morning on my listening ear
From out the blue o'erarching sphere,
Or ambient air,
There fell, as though it filled all space,
Echoing, resounding every place
And everywhere, —

A song, the sweetest ever heard.
In accent, symphony, and word
It seemed to rise.
I cannot tell you whence it came,
I only can recall the theme :
“ Man never dies ! ”

Man never dies ! Be then God praised
For wisdom, love, and length of days
World evermore !
That life, which here has just begun,
Reaches to worlds beyond the sun !
And o'er and o'er

I seemed to hear the welkin ring,
And myriad angel voices sing
Up toward the skies :
“ Love is supernal, God supreme,
Death but a fancy or a dream !
Man never dies ! ”

AN INVISIBLE CHOIR.

[The following lines were given me after hearing spirit-voices singing much of the time during the previous night. It was in the early days of my mediumship; they were, in fact, the *first* ever given me in a poetical way.]

WHAT do I hear ; what do I hear ?
Such ringing music in my ear !
Now shall I ever fear to die,
To join the realms of bliss on high ?

Now do I hear, now do I hear
Those voices singing sweet and clear !
Go, tell them bring to earth their joy,
And leave us bliss without alloy.

Now we will say : " Be still, be still,
And bide your Heavenly Father's will !
For we will send you peace at last,
And bring much happiness and rest."

THE YEARS TO COME.

[The following appeared twelve or more years ago in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," under the name (if I remember rightly) of "One of my Spirit-guides." It expresses a feeling which then possessed me, — a natural shrinking from and fear of looking into the future.]

I'M wondering what the years to come
Have in their store for me, —
A palace, or a cot, my home,
To dwell on land or sea.
Will all the plans and all the hopes
Which I now hold so dear
Find full fruition, or be lost,
As e'en I sometimes fear?

And then, whate'er I undertake
In life, shall I succeed?
Will Fortune favor, friends arise,
Whenever I may need?
"Fortune will favor those who work,"
I hear a still voice say;
"Friends will surround the truly good."
Up, then! and work away.

If now some fairy hand might raise
For me the mystic veil

Which hides the future from my gaze,
And bid me read the tale,
I tremble even as I think
Of what I might behold,
And with a nameless dread I shrink,
Lest I the truth be told.

Give me, then, only this, I pray,
Great Overruling Power,
Wisdom from thee to guide my way,
Strength for each trying hour ;
Sufficient then 't will be for me
Only this much to know, —
Thy benedictions I receive,
Well pleased with all I do.



TRUTH'S ADVENT.

WHEN earth was all gray, 'mid the shadows
Of darkness, of gloom, and of night ;
When dense were the clouds hanging o'er us,
With scarcely a ray of sunlight ;
When dark superstition still brooded
Like ominous bird with black wings,
And only to guide through the darkness
The bright star which hope ever brings ;

When war with its menacing features,
Like a spirit of evil we saw,
Was only awaiting the moment
To execute vengeance through law ;
When the black man was bowed 'neath his burden
Too great for his shoulders to bear,
And Hope had near ceased to whisper
That God would yet answer his prayer ;

When Bible and pulpit indorsing
The wrong of his mad pursuer,
Scripture was quoted and songs were sung
To favor the evil-doer ;
When Death held carnival on the earth,
And this was his own dominion ;
When all we had of the vast beyond
Was a bigot's or priest's opinion ;

When the heart sat rigid and silent
At the slam of the iron door
That closed between us and our loved ones
Who had passed to the silent shore ; —
Then God looked down from his high abode
And angels in untold numbers
Came back to the earth a trumpet to sound
To waken the soul that slumbers.

In a lowly home 'mid your own loved hills,
Though the wheels of time move slow,

The truth was at last revealed to man
The ages had waited to know.
The curtain lifted and rolled away
That had hung like a pall of gloom,
And angels were seen by *our* " Marys "
To roll back the stone from the tomb.

On, on came the holy evangel !
War broke with its terrible spell,
And where'er the vast army was camping
Were angel encampments as well ;
For here a great wrong must be righted,
The children of bondage be led
Where fair fields of freedom were waiting,
No longer a tyrant to dread.

Where children of earth are in bondage
Of body, of mind, and of soul,
While a passion still holds us in power
We have n't yet learned to control, —
The angels make every endeavor
To lead us in pathways of light,
Till truth shall triumph o'er error,
And wrong shall give way to the right.

LOVIE.

SUCH a gay, winsome, bright little spirit
Appears to be hovering near,
 With such a bright smile
 The sad hours to beguile,
And many lone moments to cheer.

When I think for a moment I'm surely alone,
And am working away with a might,
 With her nods and her winks
 Comes this queer little minx,
To tell me what she thinks is right !

Oft I see her at break of the morning,
Or at night when alone in my bed ;
 O'er the pillow she 'll peep
 When I'm trying to sleep,—
This queer little mischievous head.

All her motions so sylph-like, so funny is she,
My pen her but poorly portrays ;
 So my prayer is to-night
 That some spirit as bright
Ever after may gladden my days.

THE SEASONS.

WHEN Springtime in her beauty comes,
The trees arrayed in green,
And everywhere, o'er hill and vale,
The bright-hued flowers are seen ;
When breaking from their icy bonds
The murmuring brooklet 's heard,
And everywhere, in tree and air,
We hear the singing bird, —
Partaking of earth's brightness then
With one accord we sing,
Shouting in ecstasy of joy,
“ How beautiful is Spring ! ”

When Summer comes with darker green,
Her warm and lengthened days ;
When wood and hill, with glen and vale,
Reverberate with praise ;
When nodding in the gentle breeze
Is seen the ripened grain,
And rainbow-arched the sun shines through
The warm and sparkling rain, —
Again our hearts break forth with praise,
Our joy we deem complete,
With rapture all will then acclaim,
“ The Summer-time how sweet ! ”

Autumn comes on with mellow days,
Her many-colored leaves,
Her blue and hazy atmosphere,
Her closely garnered sheaves,
The orchards' rich and ripened fruits,
The squirrels' chirping sound
Where, after cool and frosty nights,
The ripened nuts are found.
With plenty then in barn and store,
With colors rich and rare,
Looking about, we can but say,
"Autumn is passing fair !"

Then Winter comes ; the year's grown old,
The winds blow sharp and shrill,
And by the fireside's ruddy blaze
We find there's comfort still ;
And o'er the earth, so brown and bare,
Unsightly objects all,
Is thrown as if with tenderest care
A pure and snowy pall.
With merry laughter, sound of bells
Echoing o'er hill and wood,
We'll join the merry throng and say,
"Winter is very good !"

So, with the seasons as they come,
Each in its place appears ;
In one unbroken round they form
The fast succeeding years.

And with our hearts attuned to joy,
Our lips to words of praise,
It matters not if Winter rules,
Or balmier Summer days ;
The cheerful heart may always find
Beauty in everything, —
In Winter's cold and frosty days,
As in the flowery Spring.

NOTE. — When I began this book I had a desire, and made a request, that some of the spirits who had once been the poets of earth might come to me and give me some contribution for this collection of poems. I made a special request to Alexander Pope to give me his present idea of God, remembering that when in life he wrote, —

“ We are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul.”

One morning I received the following introductory poem from one of my guides, and immediately afterward the one entitled “First Cause.” Before the second one was completed, I felt fully impressed that it came in answer to the request I had made to Pope. The next morning, before I had copied his poem, I had a visit from him, when he said: “I see you have a poor memory, or you have never read my ‘Universal Prayer.’ The poem I gave you yesterday begins with a quotation from that.” Then he referred to another line where, though not an exact quotation is given, the sentiment is the same as in a former poem. Then he said: “I have waited to see if you would recognize or remember the

quotation, but I see you do not ; you may, however, put the first line in quotation-marks. If I have now succeeded in convincing you of my presence, I will try and give you another poem," — a promise which was immediately fulfilled ; and I give both of Pope's poems as they were dictated to me. I heard them clairaudiently, line by line, and wrote them down rapidly.

INTRODUCTORY.

BY ONE OF MY GUIDES.

"OUT from the depths of the starry way,
Where lights and shadows forever play
' Hide-and-go-seek ' up above,
Where night and morning, and morn and night,
Ever renewed is the same old sight
Which mortals so dearly love, —

"I saw an angel come plainly to view,
As though a path through the heavens he knew
Which my dull eyes could not trace.
He seemed to be walking on ether there,
And yet with a firm and certain air
He marched through the heavenly place.

"Worlds he seemed to pass by unheeded,
As if his presence some mortal needed ;
And faster and faster still
He wended his way through the ether blue,
Until I saw him standing by you,
As if to obey your will.

"I cannot give you his earthly name ;
I know to earth for some good he came,
So watch, and wait his word ;
Do as he tells you, whate'er it be,
Wait for results, which you soon shall see
When you his message have heard."

I heard these words of my Guide one day,
Then waited for what this spirit might say,
Or what from the realms he brought.
And this the lesson following these lines :
Truth, I believe, through each sentence shines,
While *Trust* was the lesson taught.



FIRST CAUSE.

BY SPIRIT ALEXANDER POPE.

"THOU Great First Cause, least understood,"
Where'er thy hiding-place,
I could not know thee if I would,
Nor all thy wonders trace.

For this would finish life's great aim ;
Could we thy greatness see
We must return from whence we came,
Or be as great as thee.

The handiworks of Nature grand
Which everywhere are seen,
We can but poorly understand,
Much less what thou hast been.

Or what thou art, save through these laws,
Is past a mortal's seeing, —
Thou Great Eternal and First Cause,
Thou First and Last of being.

For I have tried through many years
While toiling here below,
Perplexed by doubts and torn by fears,
Thy majesty to know.

I measured time and earth and air,
Sought through the heavenly places,
Seeing the works of Nature there,
Which every true soul traces.

Yet what thou wert, and what thou art,
I scarce could comprehend ;
We find out but a feeble part,
E'er earth's short journeys end.

And now, you ask me after years,
If I the secret find,
Source of all human hopes and fears
That centre in the mind.

Of whence we came, and what we are,
Whither our spirits tend,
Is life eternal even here,
Or will this have an end?

Is God above and God below
But our poor idle dreaming?
Or something we can never know
Save through its outward seeming?

I have not found a God in form
To answer man's ambition,
Nor one who blesses souls above
And curses to perdition.

But I have found through Nature all
Are overruling laws,
By whatsoever name we call, —
God, or Eternal Cause.

And God I find is placed within,
We have n't far to search ;
The Savior saving us from sin
Is confined in no church.

And no church points for all the way
By "Lo here," or "Lo there,"
By creed or forms, as some still say,
Nor yet by worded prayer.

But 't is the voice of consciousness,
Deep seated in the soul,
Placed there our human lives to bless,
Parts of one wondrous whole.

I could not less say, nor yet more,
E'en after years of bliss
In wandering realms of Nature o'er,
In such a state as this.

I'm searching now to find within,
If I may ascertain,
An element to save from sin
Or soothe a mortal's pain.

I'm searching now to find a way
To remedy life's evil,
Rather than seeking day by day
To know God or the Devil.

The latter troubles least, and must
Wherever I may go.
For what God is my soul can trust,
And *only* God can know.

AN ESSAY ON ISMS.

BY THE SAME.

I.

IF Thou, Great Being whom we call First Cause,
Art best made manifest through Nature's laws,
And not through church, and creed, and priestly blessing,
How vastly then, beyond a mortal's guessing,
Has man but wasted time and talent here below,
Since first he undertook thy will to know !
Or *knowing*, as he thought he did, at least,
E'er since ordained Egypt, or Rome, a priest.
Ezekiel, Daniel, or the host unnamed,
For all these errors, Lord, who shall be blamed ?
Has mankind grovelled in the darkness here ?
Has never seen or known his pathway clear ?
Nor is he able yet to understand
The mystery of earth, or air, or land,
Or heaven, above the deep o'er-arching blue.
The many million stars that shining through,
Each one, within its sphere and proper place ;
While never one another's orb doth trace ?
And man all erring keeps on blundering yet,
As if the plans of Nature to upset,
As if he, of all other things in space
Alone had power to leave his proper place !
As if he knew, and better understood
Than even the Maker of all earthly good,

Or God, at best, could superintend above.
Could tell this planet, or that, where to move ;
Could govern everything, above, below,
But just this little world ; while it would go
To sure destruction, did not God at least
Put most of mortals in the care of priests,
Who are to tell us which way we should go,
While all things else in Nature seem to know.
Be this as't may. We look back o'er the ages,
Glancing, as best we can, through history's pages ;
Bringing the nations of the earth to view,
'T would seem man had n't had much else to do.
He's reared his altars, made his sacrifice,
Has had his books of teaching, so called "wise,"
Has talked of God as of a common man,
And he could give the whole creation's plan.
Has quarrelled with his neighbor when he could,
As though he held the all of what was good,
And if his brother *could n't*, what he gave,
He's labelled him a "Heathen," "Fool," or "Knave."
Christian or Heathen, be he what he may,
Man, only man, all tending the same way.
Yet all deem theirs the best, others all accurst ;
So self-assured in wisdom from the first.
Jew, or Gentile, ancient Greek or Roman,
And, after all, they're none of them but human.
The Greek, with gods that fill the very air,
The Roman, also finding them e'erwhere.
The nymphs of water, air, and sky above,

The stars be their abode. Juno, or Jove,
Jehovah, Brahm, Zebu, Bird, or Beast.
The Christ time came. Among the last, not least
Of all religious great upon the earth, to-day,
Which claim to teach mankind the only way ;
Heralded, 't is said, by angels in the air,
Who sang their joyous songs of welcome there,
To God, the King Eternal, born of men,
Come on the earth to rule o'er us again.
Having lost, thus 't would seem, dominion once,
Who 'd think the Great Creator such a dunce,
Or, that a being, making worlds on worlds,
Of all the countless systems through space hurled,
Should make our little earth, and then forget it,
Or leave it e'en long enough to let it
Pass out from under his control, almost
Determined then to save at any cost.
And then, when searching earth and heav'n on high,
Looked on mankind only to pass him by !
Looked even on the saintly face of woman,
Dissatisfied with every off'ring human.
Then, searching through all heavenly places,
Back to the earth quickly his way traces ;
Becomes a man ! Being born of woman !
Neither a God is he, nor is he human.
But God in Man, and Man in God as one ;
The Holy Spirit and a Virgin's son !
Compelled on earth a carpenter to dwell,
To fix a plan for saving souls from hell.

To be condemned, then crucified, at last
The sacrifice is o'er, the suffering past,
And God, once more triumphant through his Son,
Is satisfied — as when the world begun.
And man must bear this message to the race
From out this narrow, old, Judæan place ;
And takes his wares religious round Creation,
As if the only means of man's salvation.
All older systems then must stand aside,
All Egypt's ancient lore, and Judah's pride,
All India, with her secrets still untold,
Must bow submissive to this Conqueror bold.
The work began. Go with me to the first,
And find themselves of all the race accurst.
Driven from cave to cave, and haunts of men ;
Scourged, whipped, encouraged, and then whipped again.
Till Constantine upholding helps to win,
Compelling men by force to flee from sin.
When emperors and kings consent to be
The means of saving grace for Deity ;
Then grace accepted is by fools and sages,
Becomes the honored guest of mighty ages.
Ages may pass, unless a mightier rise,
To lead the hosts of men to paradise.
They'll plod along. And falling into line
As all the *faithful* did, swear it divine.
And if one rises who but thinks at all,
Their imprecations on his head will fall ;
Unless recanting, or a great uprising

Is first of progress these poor fools apprising.
The parent Church thinks *itself* a saint, —
Of all mankind besides makes loud complaint ;
Determines all shall to its power yield,
Accept the teachings unto it revealed ;
Starts out to conquer all the race of man :
Whoso believeth not shall then be damned.
Melanchthon, Luther, Huss, and many more,
These broke the bond and stepped out through the door,
Determined they free air should breathe at least,
Without dictation from a Pope or Priest.
Priests *they* became to those who came their way,
To learn what these dissenters had to say ;
Crowds now unnumbered followed in their wake,
To hear the gospel for the dear Lord's sake.
Freedom, at least good-will, to all proclaiming
Who but accept his grace, the Savior naming.
They came from off the parent stock, of course,
Yet trace its meaning to its higher source.
Let them but tell the story to all others,
Then *they* begin to *whip* their younger brothers.
Calvin Servetus sentenced to the stake,
As if he were a murderer or rake.
Martyrs unnumbered line the bloody way
Which leads us onward toward the present day, —
Quakers bare-backed, dragged through the dirty city,
No hand that dared to help, and none to pity.
And slavery, high-handed, held dominion,
Sustained by Bible and the priest's opinion.

So-called Religion on the earth ran riot,
Preaching a gospel of *good will and quiet* ;
Then fighting to maintain it everywhere,
As though but devils filled the very air.
The persecuted Quakers took the rod ;
The Methodist reviled, now serves his God,
By following up those later in the van,
According to the *time* and *age* of man.
Each one that 's been the hated of all others
Now falls in line, hating their younger brothers,
Shouting all evil as he comes this way.
You 'd think the very Devil was to pay
To hear them call each other names, and cry
Against each other as each passes by :
This has no creed, and that has worse than none ;
This has but Father God, knows not the Son ;
And "Athiest," "Infidel," they shout as well,
With names so many that no tongue could tell.
For calling names and making up wry faces
Have of rack and thumbscrew taken the places.
Till all at once all hands turn looking out
To see what all this shouting is about ;
For Paine has come, with his outrageous treason
Against religion in his "Age of Reason."
So all have something else to do awhile.
'T would make the Devil in his ambush smile,
Or make him look in wonder and surprise
To see them beat himself inventing lies.
His arguments they could not meet at all,

So on his head their imprecations fall.
O man ! thou, strangely made and born of woman,
Art, after all thy boasting, *very* human,
And strangely human through the lower laws
Which manifest through *thee* from central cause ;
Like earth, thy *mother*, belchest mud and fire,
Or like thy father, God, some pure desire,
Whichever may be called forth by the events ;
Thus sinning oft, as oft turning, oft repents, —
Repents and sins, fancies he knows the whole,
Can point *all* others to the human goal.
Move in thine orbit, thou wilt find at last
The bow of promise for all souls is cast ;
And not on thee alone its rays divine,
But in all human souls Truth's rays will shine,
Reflecting with their radiance Heaven's own light, —
A savior born within to lead aright,
Lest some immortal soul be left a stranger
To saviors born for men in cave or manger.

II.

Know this, O friends ! (turn wheresoe'er we may,
Think fools all dead, the wise ones *live* to-day ;
That superstitious work has been completed,
And foolishness and bigotry defeated),
That *still* we find the same old laws at work
Which we have seen in Christian, Bhud, or Turk.
Deem not that Nature yet has spent her force,

Nor exhausted is her wonderful resource
In making up the marvellous array
Of "isms," reaching to the present day,
Though she has furnished ancient Greece and Rome,
Though art and science found with these their home.
Religions, — one ; yes, and religions many,
With names enough to suit the taste of any ;
With creeds enough, isms enough to curse us, or to bless us,
It seems withal the *Devil* would possess us,
Unless some one may come on whom 't will fall
To give us sense enough to shun them all.
But with this vast array we've not yet done ;
Here comes a woman with another one !
She has an old theme with a late appliance,
Labels her wares religious, *Christian* science.
God pity science, pity Christians too,
If any these must learn from such as you !
If to find Spirit, God, and Truth divine
One must first see earth's filthy lucre shine ;
If one must tortured walk by mortal pain,
Unless we ducats have, or some must gain.
If e'er her secret power o'er one she pour,
They needs must turn five hundred roubles o'er.
Then keep thy secrets, Spirit, God profound,
Until with one less selfish they are found ;
And if upon the earth thou comest again,
We pray *thee* that it may be among men,
For even they, though selfish as a horde,
When keeping thus the secrets of the Lord,

Still *they* have kept, at least with a pretence
Of grace through faith, rather than recompense ;
While with this Priestess we can only see
Salvation given through a golden key.
O fools ! to follow where such mortals lead,
When you 're the lamb or bullock that must bleed !
For all the good that I through such might gain,
I'd rather bear the ill, suffer the pain ;
Or, better still, make common-sense appliance
Of *living well* out-rival Christian science.
Science or "ism," be this what it may,
This is n't all with which we deal to-day :
Theologies, biologies, and woe
More than one mortal mind can ever know.
Faults all have had, and virtues not a few
Belong to all these "isms," old and new.
If they are all at fault, what's the conclusion ?
God at least permitted this confusion.
And you must needs admit God is at fault,
Or things are moving on much as they ought,
Expressive of old Nature and her laws,
And true in every case each to their cause.
So let them work. Volcanic ruptures may
Seem dreadful ills, looked on but for a day ;
Earthquakes and schisms of the earth beneath
Seem to us like a fiery serpent's breath
Working destruction dire and utter ruin,
Until from future heights the scene we 're viewing :
Then we behold 't was Nature's greater plan

To purify the earth for coming man.
As Nature doth, so doth her children here,
Their parentage proclaiming everywhere ;
And as smoke, fire, and heat come from the one,
Showing its centre like a molten sun,
And as 't breaks forth volcanic, it may be
The force within, determined to be free,
Breaking forth, shakes up the crust a little, —
'T is only that the crust 's so very brittle.
So molten fires pent up within the soul,
Like Mother Nature, will not brook control.
And pent-up passions trained are great desires,
Breaking the outer crust are limpid fires ;
So crime and sin are fires breaking through,
The walls which held them are so very new.
God is creating better, — this I know ;
'T will take long years before the work is through.
Close by the mountains where eruptions play,
Beautiful cities oft are swept away ;
And so it is where dwell these inner fires,
Sometimes a mortal suffers, or expires.
In just proportion to the mighty whole,
A mountain belches or a human soul ;
And if one say, " 'T is but condoning sin,"
This only ask, Who put the fires within ?
If there be more than outer shell can hold,
There will explosion be, suffering untold.
In God's time, Nature's time, 't will better be,
Body and soul be brought in harmony,

Each lesser passion subject to control,
Reason and judgment dominate the whole.
Nature perfects, brings harmony to light,
And seeming error flies before the right,
Volcanoes cease to throw their molten fire,
And passion settles to a strong desire.
For trained aright, an impetus is given,
A lever to the soul that lifts toward heaven.
Then trust to Nature, Nature's God as well,
Who builds no special fires, creates no hell,
But puts a spark of living light within,
Which fans to flames of hell, or saves from sin ;
And know, that where these pent-up fires may be,
Though rough external token we may see,
She worketh through this underlying cause
A slow fulfilment of her higher laws.
We may not estimate or read aright
Until, it may be, centuries take their flight ;
But on their summit some will surely see
Error and discord end in harmony.
There 's *one* among the "isms" which grace the day, —
Or disgrace it, its enemies would say ;
For ever thus as it is the *few* behold
The mines containing hidden wealth of gold ;
And oftentimes beneath external sign
Of mean apparel lies the truth divine,
And many a Christ has sandal-footed stood
Unrecognized among the self-styled good, —
So this, though it came not to earth an "ism,"

Yet Truth, where'er it comes, creates a schism.
Whether a Christ upon Judæa's plains
(Who hates hypocrisy and hoarded gains,
Until he hated is in sin's dominions
For his outspoken truths and bold opinions ;
And crucified, pinned to the cross at last,
While howling mobs of ignorant fools go past),
Or this new Christ, 'mong lowly ones of earth,
Though not in manger born, but humble birth,
The wise ones of to-day, as they of old,
Think 't is but a usurper brave and bold.
They know not truth wherever it appears,
Not in the past or in the present years,
Until it's crowned triumphant as a king ;
Then, all uprising, to their feet they spring,
And bear their palms and wave their banners high,
Swearing allegiance as it passes by,
Saying, " I did not thee deny," " Nor I,"
" Nor I," the multitude. But when alone
The winepress treading, and by all unknown ;
When hooted at, derided, and ill-treated ;
When on the bench the judge and jury seated,
Gave wise decisions in their courts of clay, —
They knew not Truth was passing by that way.
When Truth descends on earth *this* day and hour,
They know her only by her works or power.
She wears no cloak or priestly garb or cowl ;
And lacking these, the wily mob must howl.
She comes too lowly, in too mean a way ;

When seeking only children at their play,
They think her mission of too small a matter.
When she resorts to such a noise and clatter,
God rolls in thunder, moves the mighty stones
In great upheavals and in awful groans ;
But let a finite soul resort to such,
For modern credence it is quite too much.
All shout at once, " It is n't spirit, sure ;
Ages eternal shall for aye endure."
But oh, Consistency, 'thou 'rt hard to find !
We need not look for thee 'mong human kind.
Amid this din, confusion, noise, and clatter,
The world turns toward it, asking, " What 's the matter ? "
Science turns round and answers, " I don't know ! "
The Christian says, " The Devil,— I told you so ! "
And out of this confusion grows an " ism,"
Which makes among mankind the greatest schism.
Millions acknowledge it the present hour,
While all admit *behind it there's a power* ;
And Truth moves onward. Mighty conqueror, then,
Thou art once more among the sons of men,
Opening up the gates, throwing wide the door
Which leads through death into the evermore.
Spirits returning are in untold numbers
Waking to living thoughts the soul that slumbers ;
And giving best they can the way, the Truth,
To mankind, to old age, to thoughtless youth.
All have been held in bondage, fear of death :
Hear then what this the living witness saith.

Comes not with parchment, nor with book of gold,
Comes only with a simple tale that 's told ;
The stone is rolled away from every tomb ;
Death and the grave robbed of their deepest gloom ;
Indeed, the living, not the dead, walk forth,
Are seen by those east, west, the south, and north ;
These bear their message to the farther shore,
Until we hear the British Lion roar.
The truth resounds from nation unto nation, —
A wider plan by nature, of salvation ;
Not by God's popes or priests' opinion,
But Nature holding all in her dominion.
Put *some* of God in every human soul,
Lest one might rob another of the whole ;
And thus, instead of giving Death the power
To rob a soul of its immortal dower,
She placed the germ in each of life eternal,
Giving it power to blossom there supernal ;
Until we find it breaking every fetter,
Triumphant over all, by all made better.
No creeds have they, or books loved most,
But truth will have, whatever be the cost ;
And having this, will live it best they can,
Unless forbidden by the laws of man.
Hence come confusion and disaster dire,
Proof of the inner smouldering fire
Of passion, and determined power to rule,
By making all adhere to the old school
Of thought, theology, and physics too,

Determined they 'll have nothing that is new.
And so to legislative hall they run,
Cementing chains thereby for every one ;
All the while pretending it 's a blessing,
Deceitfully the public still caressing, —
As though the public did n't know its needs
As well as he who plasters, pills, and bleeds.
Two thirds of them, being Christian doctors too,
Forget the simple, unpretending Jew
Who healed by will and laying on of hands,
By simple word of truth and its commands ;
Who, if he walked the solid earth to-day,
Healing in this same unpretending way,
Would be a "Quack," "Pretender," "Crank" at best,
Scouted, ruled out, and hooted with the rest.
For should they ask for parchment, scrip, or roll,
He could n't give them one, to save his soul !
Or if arraigned before the modern schools,
Who give such wise receipts for making fools,¹
Methinks if they should ask that he give sign
By something he might do, of truth divine,
He 'd answer, something as he did before,
"O hypocrites ! ye scan the heavens o'er,
And think you read the face there of the sky,
But fail discerning as you 're passing by,
Signs of the times." Then turning once again,
"O wicked and adulterous 'mong men !"
Then, as if he read their inner motives ev'n,
"Thou seekest that which never will be given !"

¹ The Seybert Commission on Spiritualism.

Go ! truth needs not to bow before thy shrine
To prove to man her mission is divine ;
For did she need protection of the schools,
Or ask the homage e'en of learned fools,
She would have come to stately halls of learning,
Lowly homes of earth and stables spurning ;
But here she is, once more on earth with men,
And Nature's laws e'er faithful prove again,
Just as they have in ages now gone past.
Where'er among the "isms" our eyes we cast,
That they who 'd oft-times persecuted been,
Knew, of course, how to persecute again ;
They who had, had all manner said of evil,
Said, "It is Beelzebub," or "'Tis the devil."
The Jews said this two thousand years ago.
Slow are the years, for still 't is all they know ;
The Devil's just as powerful as ever,
Just as full of wit, cunning and clever ;
And if perchance he should give up the ghost,
For argument the clergy would be lost ;
And Flavius Josephus Cook, of now,
Believes as much as Calvin, anyhow ;
And falls back on the Devil with such grace,
To help him out of some bewildering place.
He's been experimenting much too far,¹

¹ Joseph Cook experimented with and received communications through the mediumship of Charles Watkins, the slate-writer. The truth and seriousness of these communications Mr. Cook at first freely admitted ; but later, and for reasons best known to himself, he publicly attributed them to diabolism.

And pinched his fingers in the "gates ajar,"
Then gets up and denies himself the while, —
No one who sees it could repress a smile ;
While Talmage turns a summersault in air,
Such haste has he to find the Devil there,
That he may find some one on whom to lay
The works of Spirits on the earth to-day.
But here or there, so much and even more,
For enemies we find outside the door ;
But what to say, or where one might begin
To speak of those who injure from within.
There 's one accepting everything he sees.
Show him, O crafty vender ! what you please ;
And what you don't claim, he 's sure to do,
As though the all of truth at last he knew.
Go then behind your screen, "peep and mutter,"
Whisper nonsense, and a white rag flutter ;
This believing one will bow before it,
Idealize, worship, and adore it.
And why ? Because you 've touched a sacred spot,
Treading on ground many a true soul dares not ;
And yet you walk with a presuming tread
Over the sacred memories of the dead.
Truth, Right, Justice, where are these arrayed,
That such pretenders sit here undismayed ?
Spirits there are then on the earth to-day.
Why speak they not, when error stalks this way ?
O friends, be patient ! think you these ne'er know
Because they 're silent, — think there 's naught they do ?

Error its own destruction works, and must ;
Clear-seeing ones fly from it with disgust ;
And they who traffic in the blood of souls
Will reap the sure reward of gnomes and ghouls.
Swift is the law, and vengeance follows soon !
These work with their own hands their certain doom.
What shall we say of what wheat there may be
Mingled with all the tares and chaff we see ?
Why wheat is wheat ! My friend, don't you know it ?
If covered up with chaff, why, blow it !
The chaff will fly before the fanning-mill ;
The wheat is solid and remains there still.
The wheat may not exactly like the plan,
But winnowing is good for wheat, or man.
Trials come not alone ; woes upon woe !
Here comes a crafty fox with wily toe.
Were all the "isms" then reduced to one,
Their craft and cunning, ere this deed was done !
The wheel of fortune seems to turn this way,
A very Judas in this latter day.
It once in turning turned a traitor out, —
The cause the better for it, no doubt.
Trust then to Time, the one great revelator,
We'll find our cause not less, and may be greater ;
For such the power of Justice and of Time,
It makes Error a slave to Truth divine.
So we may count, whatever in the race
Of Truth and Error we may see take place,
That God is working in and through them all.

Trust then his wisdom, whate'er may befall ;
If not, then take the reins in thine own hand, —
Measure the ocean, count the grains of sand,
Sweep up the tides and measure them, O man !
Speak to the whirlwind, stop it, if you can !
Bid it to stand there, not to whirl on high,
Nor scatter sand or water, passing by.
Take up the icebergs from the northern sea,
Then plant the tropics where these used to be ;
Then make a colony for poor men there, —
There 's such a waste of energy somewhere !
God 's run things pretty nearly long enough,
You 're made of wiser and of better stuff.
Sin, crime, and chaos seem to rule, you say,
Then take your sphere from that of common clay,
And toward the higher heavens make your way.
Damned souls are running through the gates of hell,
The Devil could n't keep them very well.
Pope was doubtful here. Paine has broken loose.
They could n't keep him ; trying was no use.
The priests are right ; they 're flying all around us,
And, while they do, our loved ones too have found us.
Saint Peter surely must have lost his keys !
No wonder ! For he could n't have felt at ease.
It goes without our telling, needs no showing,
Sight of him yet might set the roosters crowing.
We 've had our Maggie, they Peter and Paul, —
Rogues each of them by turn, and good in all.
Temptations strong enough, at a human door

They fall ! And angels do no less, or more ;
While fallen angels make good devils, you see,
Traitors reinstated hold heaven's key.
In view of all, we must at least conclude
That Nature does her best, and God is good.



THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE.

BY EDGAR A. POE.

I was watching o'er the earth-land
From the place where spirits now stand,
From the place where spirits gather, in that far "Plutonian
shore,"
And I saw a great upheaval,
As though led by powers of evil,
Who had come from out the darkness, wandering the
earth-land o'er,
Who had come from out the darkness to disturb, if nothing
more, —
To disturb, if nothing more.

And my spirit hushed and trembled
As the mighty hosts assembled,
Here and there assembled in their conclaves all the earth-
land o'er.
Men who hitherto were quiet,
Muttered threateningly of riot ;

This their universal fiat : " We 'd have justice, nothing,
nothing more ; "
Claiming they had asked for justice, simple justice, nothing
more, —
Simple justice, nothing more.

Hushed and with their breath abated,
Tales of wrong each one related,
Told their tales of poverty and suffering, told them o'er
and o'er ;
Till we knew a great uprising,
Spite of all the good advising
Would of danger first apprising, from the hungry and the
poor.
Desperate made perhaps by hunger if for this and nothing
more, —
If for this and nothing more.

Then my heart beat quick within,
Lest the trouble should begin.
Quick breaths chased each other through my being, o'er
and o'er ;
For I saw the smoke and fire
Of the battle drawing nigher, —
Of the battle drawing nigher even to our very door :
Man to man with man contending for the right, and
nothing more, —
For the right, and nothing more.

Man to man at last united,
Asked that labor be requited
With an honest compensation, its reward for evermore ;
This comes up from every nation, —
“ Labor asks its compensation ! ”
And the distance takes the echo and repeats it o'er and
o'er,
“ Labor asks its compensation,” — only this, and nothing
more ;
Only this, and nothing more.

Through the streets of many a city,
Turning many a heart to pity,
Marched battalions of the toilers, moved as never here-
tofore,
Pushed on with a strong endeavor,
To defeated be no, never !
Right they wanted now, if ever ; long they 'd waited
heretofore ;
Victory 'd crown them or they 'd perish ! This they could,
if nothing more, —
This they could, if nothing more.

Onward moves the agitation
“ Like a mighty conflagration,”
Till it reaches every nation, spreading on from shore to
shore ;
Millions are their needles plying,
Toiling, suffering, starving, dying !

Is there one this truth denying? as he looks the picture
o'er.

He who looks the picture o'er, knows this truth, if nothing
more, —

Knows this truth, if nothing more.

That their wrongs they be redressing,
That their rights they be possessing,
Rolls this mighty agitation as it moves the earth-land
o'er.

German serfs bow down no longer ;
With their manhood growing stronger,
They can bear the yoke no longer, yoke of bondage hard
and sore.

For opinions freely spoken, oft they flee their native
shore, —

Just for this, and nothing more.

Prussia, iron-handed master,
Drives her subjects from her faster ;
And they seek protection from her tyranny, upon our
shore.

Onward hurrying, still they're coming,
And the busy factories, humming,
All the threads of commerce thumbing, welcome them
for evermore ;

Welcome them as toilers, laborers on our soil, if nothing
more, —

Just for this, if nothing more.

India or China and Japan,
Black or brown, each is a man !
With the spirit of their manhood pushing onward more
and more.

So we see the tide turns ever
With a restless, strong endeavor,
Freedom to have now or never, and their manhood, —
nothing more ;
Simple chance for manhood asking, only this and nothing
more, —
Only this and nothing more.

Can there ever be a greater
Peace-destroyer, agitator,
Than for man to wrong his brother till he turn upon him,
sore ?

This will stir the stagnant waters,
This will move the sons and daughters
Bitterly, the sons and daughters, o'er their grievances to
pore ;
Till at last they seek their freedom, — only this, and
nothing more ;
Only this, and nothing more.

Italy in her dominion
Lashes for a serf's opinion,
And in bondage darker even holds the mind for evermore.
Art may have with her its home,
But she has her Pope and Rome.

These have with her their home and their power of
bondage evermore :

Bondage dark enough fair Italy to curse, if nothing more, —
This her curse, if nothing more.

Oh fairest Green Isle of the sea,
Could any mortal turn to thee
And not feel a pang of sorrow in his spirit evermore ?
Desolate, sad, and dejected,
Wronged, illtreated, and neglected,
Even from your homes ejected, driven from their very
door.
Call they out in pitying anguish, for their rights, and
nothing more, —
Just their rights, and nothing more.

Hear their sighing and their groaning !
Hear their weeping and their moaning !
Can the tyrants then who hold them listen to this o'er
and o'er,
And not feel the whole earth tremble
As the heavenly hosts assemble, —
On the plains of earth assemble, hosts of right for ever-
more ?
Power majestic, these should fear thee, and be just, if
nothing more, —
Should be *just*, if nothing more.

Landlords, your career is fated !
Tyranny, thy breath is hated !
Freemen of the soil are waking to their rights, if nothing
more.
Do you think to hold them ever ?
That their freedom they 'll seek never ?
"Man shall break the fetters binding, and be free for
evermore !"
Truth and Justice this demanding, 't is his right, and
nothing more, —
'T is his right, and nothing more.

Then the hosts of earth unnumbered,
Waking, they who long have slumbered,
Turn, determined to be free, toward America's fair shore.
Come they here from every nation,
With their woes and desolation,
Seeking here at least salvation from their bondage ever-
more ;
Seeking only rest and freedom from their ills, and nothing
more, —
Freedom seeking, nothing more.

And I watched, expectant ever,
The result of man's endeavor,
Watched as spirits only watch who guard earth's interests
evermore ;

And I saw a great uprising,
First of danger all apprising,
Spite of every good advising, and I heard a mighty roar.
'T was the cry of earnest labor asking justice, nothing
more, —
Justice asking, nothing more.

Then again my spirit trembled
As the mighty hosts assembled,
Shaking heavily the ground beneath their tread the whole
earth o'er ;
And I felt a mortal terror
Lest they guided be in error, —
Felt a shrinking and a terror of the scenes which lay
before,
Unless wisest counsels saved them. Then I knew of nothing
more, —
I could think of nothing more.

Stand aside, O tyrant master !
For the people's step is faster,
And the throbbing of their heart-beats and their quick
step tells us more.
Right has had procrastination,
Till the law of compensation
Worketh with them their salvation, as the wheels of time
roll o'er,

Grinding out through compensation righteousness, and
nothing more, —
Righteousness, and nothing more.

Be a man, then, to thy brother ;
What thou seekest give another, —
Is the golden rule of life and truth for evermore.
Christ this gospel preached below ;
All true souls its value know ;
And search far above, below, search the isles of wisdom
o'er,
Find gods one, or find gods many, they could give you
nothing more, —
Gods could give you nothing more.



AN ADDENDUM.

WHEN the earth was dark and dreary,
And when mortal kind grew weary,
Scarcely knowing whether heaven above
Held *all* treasures of their earthly love,
And when mortal fear oppressed them,
Lest some evil power possessed them
In his regions sulphurous below, —
Sulphurous regions and abyss of woe.

Then there came to earth an angel,
Acting as a bright evangel
Unto all earth's weary mortals, —
Opened to them heavenly portals,
Showing them the dear ones gone before,
Bringing peace and rest for evermore,
As they lifted up the curtain
Which had made heaven so uncertain.

Then also a mortal waited,
Asking that a truth be stated
Of the life awaiting over there,
By some spirit who was lingering near ;
And I seized the chance as ever,
Gave my thought as an endeavor,
Sent it forth, — a thought to meet the world,
Fairly into form and being hurled.

Once again I saw her waiting,
And experience relating,
Earth's farewell I gave her then,
Left her presence ; feeling when
Powers of earth and recollections
Caused my soul undue reflections,
I would tarry in the spheres above,
Wrap my soul with mantle of pure love.

But I find e'en heaven is tiresome,
And that even rest is irksome,

And that mortals, still attracting
Something from my soul exacting,
And I answer *sometimes*, from above
My existence to them thus to prove,
And as spirits even sometimes may,
Send my thought to earth from far away.

Thought, it is a subtle thing,
Flies about on viewless wing ;
And you mortals even know
How to speed it to and fro.
Quick, on a magnetic wire
Send your thought as you desire,
Or by invention later known,
You whisper through a telephone.

So is it surprising, then,
That we spirits speak to men ?
Nor need we even stand below
Always by your side, you know ;
For love is a subtle wire,
Mind impells its own desire ;
And by means to you as yet unknown
Mightier, subtler than the telephone, —

Sweeps across the distance wide
That the two worlds e'er divide, —
That of thought, and that of sense,
That of deep, profound silence ;

Yet, to souls that listen well,
Notes of rhythmic music swell, —
Rhythmic, runic, life's deep undertone,
Coursing, filling all this nether zone,

Rising, swelling, beating higher,
As the other life draws nigher.
So again when you're alone,
Whisper through the telephone ;
I shall hear you, e'en though far away,
Come to earth, if come to earth I may ;
Or if not, will send to you my thought,
With at least my good will ever fraught.



THE ISLAND OF TIME.

I STAND on a beautiful island,
Between two wonderful seas ;
It's covered with beautiful verdure,
And bounded by beautiful trees.
I know as I stand on this island,
It may be but for a day,
For thousands have stood where I now stand,
And thousands have passed away.

And thousands there are still about me,
Moving restlessly to and fro ;

Each one is intent apparently
On that which he has to do ;
And each is aware, as I am,
That he may be here but a day ;
So they hustle and jostle each other,
So anxious to speed on their way.

And each seems to feel, as all others,
That the island appears very small ;
And each looks about on two great seas
Which ever encircle us all.
And all that have reached this island,
Have seemed to rise from one sea :
To be swallowed up by the other,
The fate of all seems to be.

Though the island seems small and narrow,
Some have wandered a hundred years,
Gathering the pearls on its borders,
Or seaming their faces with tears,
E'er they wandered down to its border,
Or stood on the sandy shore, —
Anxious to try the waves of the sea
That had gathered the loved of yore.

Others came from the sea of the past ;
Looked, as it seemed to me,
Startled, frightened, and then disappeared
Down into the other sea, —

As though there was nought enticing,
The winds were too cold and strong ;
They 'd risk the crossing the other sea,
Rather than tarry here long.

Some stayed for a little while ; and then,
Just as we 'd learned most to prize,
Playing down on the beach by the sea,
They disappeared from our eyes.
Some grew wrinkled, and some grew gray,
Some had such weary faces ;
Some tried the best they could, on their way,
To grow in the higher graces.

Some were selfish and greedy, and they
Held all that their hands could hold ;
While others, so hungry and ragged,
Had none of the island's gold.
And but few seemed to care for either,
Except for a little hour, —
The beggar's rags, the miser with gold,
Or the one with kingly power.

For each one of these at last vanished,
Or borne away seemed to be,
As each, wandering round on the island,
Stepped at last down into the sea.
An old man I watched as advancing,
With two heavy bags by his side, —

They had grown too heavy for bearing,
So he sat and watched them with pride.

With a hand on each bag he watched them,
Fearing somebody might touch
That which had become but a burden,
Because he had gathered too much.
And while he was watching intently,
A great wave washed up from the sea,
Leaving only the two heavy bags,
Where the old man used to be.

And soon there were gathered around them
A querulous, bickering clan,
Talking of gold, and what it would do,
But never a word of the man.
I saw but one thing that was lasting,
As each disappeared from my sight,
And that was that some left behind them
A radiant pathway of light ;

And that all who entered that pathway,
Or touched its halo of light,
Were always the wiser and happier,
As it led them into the light.
And I noticed many who came there
Brought, too, a light of their own,
And so 't is the light of the ages
On the island of time has grown.

Philosophers, sages, and prophets
Their light on the island have thrown,
And books are the reservoirs for them, —
Lighthouses through which they have shone.
'T was mine by the "gifts of the gods," aye
To rise into one of these towers,
There, taking a view of this great sea
Encircling this island of ours.

I saw, as I gazed in the distance,
A land of perpetual bloom :
It stretched far out through infinite space,
At last for all souls there was room.
And by some mysterious power
Which I could not understand,
All who had gone down into the sea
Had come up in the better land.

And I saw there houses and homes so fair,
In a land of joy and light :
It made me content with waiting here :
So blest was my soul with the sight
That I courted earth's toils and sorrow,
As only in feeble measure,
Compared with the sure reward to be,
Or the soul's eternal treasure.

Then I took a glimpse of the other sea,
And o'er it my vision cast,

From whence souls came, as it seemed to me, —
The mystical sea of the past.
It contained the islands of When and Where,
These wonder isles of the now, —
Their rock-bound coast and sea-gulls' eyrie,
And shoals of the When and How.

But as I was gazing, my vision
Seemed touched by an angel's hand,
And through the mist and the distance then
I saw and could understand
That life was an infinite ocean,
And this was an infinite sea, —
The island of Time, the shoals When and Where,
In the sea of Eternity.



MY JEWELS.

ONCE, upon a sunny morning,
I was looking o'er my gems ;
For, although you might not think it,
I have costly diadems.

I have pearls which shine in splendor
With a radiance of light
Soft and sweet, clear and translucent,
Whiter than the clearest white.

I have diamonds sparkling brighter
Than the hues of every sun,
If the rays of all the brightest
Were all gathered into one.

I have sapphires, I have rubies,
These are all set in my crown ;
All the jewels which I speak of,
Ancient are and of renown.

I can wear them when I will it,
And no fear of thieves, you know ;
For no one can ever touch them :
With my soul these jewels go.

One of them came as a birthright, —
Gift of God from realms above ;
This one is my brightest diamond,
And its radiance is love.

Many-tinted, e'er reflecting
Every shade and every hue :
Every one who touches this one,
Adds a gleam of glistening dew.

Thus it grows bright, and still brighter,
Never growing dim or old ;
As I turn it o'er, this jewel,
It reflects beauties untold.

There are smiles deep hidden in it
Which throw forth a radiance white ;
There are vows spoken in whispers :
Rosy tinted is their light.

Love of friends, — and there are many, —
Sainted ones of other days ;
Father, Mother, now arisen :
Words would fail to sing their praise !

Love of child and love of husband,
Love of sister, — diamonds bright,
Brighter than the star of evening,
Or the north star's guiding light.

These are diamonds, too, of nature,
Treasured as the very best ;
And I wear them, lest I lose them,
Closely covered on my breast.

Pearls are mine, of richest lustre,
From the realms of thought above ;
Round my brow they daily cluster :
These the gift of higher love.

In some pearls I see the faces
Shining out of long ago ;
Others, as their light reveals them
Of the earth, I do not know.

But they come to me from thought's realm
With a lustre pure and white ;
And when placed among my jewels,
Then I know them by their light !

It is mine to see the spirit
Shining out from realms of day ;
It is mine to hear the voices
E'en of children at their play.

It is mine to hear their whispers,
And my soul can understand
These are gems of purest lustre
Given me by God's own hand.

These I wear among my treasures,
Foremost jewels in my crown ;
These are jewels of the spirit, —
Ancient too, and of renown.

Thus it is my crown 's completed
As I wear it day by day :
None of these can ever perish ;
I shall wear them hence away.

I would not exchange these jewels
For the hoarded wealth of earth ;
Counting these that fade and perish
Here in time, of far less worth.

Then I'm rich, friends, in the spirit,
Though I have no boasting pride ;
Still, if I must part with these gems,
Or with everything beside,

Take all wealth of earth, beside them,
All that perish and decay ;
Leave my jewels of the spirit, —
Mine for ever and for aye.



THE RULES OF THE SCHOOLS.

SOME wise men of earth started out the other night
For research in psychical knowledge ;
They 'd a minister there, — in fact, they 'd a pair,
A lawyer, and head of a college.
So down in the crypt of a church they descended,
Where dead bones and ashes decay.
To these consorts with ghouls, who descend in dark holes,
Commend me for knowledge, I pray, —
To a Harvard professor,
A preacher or two,
And a lawyer, commend me for knowledge ;
To Seybert Commissions,
To Psychic Committees,
And heads of the Andover College.

To Seybert Commissions for knowledge of things
Of which they know nothing at all ;
To decide against those whom Truth chose on her way,
Or who, listening, heard her first call.
To see if the spirits who come among men
Stand the test of some modern appliance.
O God ! come this way, Great Spirit, I pray,
To be crucially tested by science !

 To a Harvard Professor,
 A preacher or two,
And a lawyer, commend me for knowledge ;
 To Seybert Commissions,
 To Psychic Committees,
And heads of the Andover College !

To Andover's wisdom the heathen commend,
Though thousands of years have rolled round,
If this is God's plan of salvation for men,
Before the poor heathen were found.
Then Andover's wisdom, in councils sedate,
Œcumenical, solemn, and grand,
With a shake of the head they decide that the dead
Shall for ever and ever be damned !

 To a Harvard professor,
 A preacher or two,
And a lawyer, commend me for knowledge ;
 To Seybert Commissions,
 To Psychic Committees,
And heads of the Andover College !

SABBATH LAWS.

BY ROBERT BURNS.

I 'VE heard it said,
Or I have read
Upon the earth o' late,
That men of mind
Are now inclined
This thought to agitate.

In fact, they say
God's holy day
Has not the reverence given
It should receive,
Or men should give,
Who think to enter heaven.

And they 're concerned,
These men so learned
About the fate o' souls,
That all should reach,
Through what they teach,
The higher heavenly goals.

They 're taking pains
The Sunday trains
To worry off the track.

The papers, too,
These worthies rue,
And want to hurl them back.

They think the men
Who work on them
Should have their time their own,
As well as they
Who preach and pray,
And bow before the throne.

They 'd put a stop
Or weight on top
The engine's heavy breath ;
They 'd take the pile
O' news on file,
And be its sudden death.

This busy world
Is being hurled
Too rapidly, they say ;
They 'd take a pin
And put it in,
And stop it while they may.

This pin is law :
They find a flaw,
And rush to legislation ;
And call aloud
To stop the crowd,
Compelling men's salvation.

A day of rest
At their behest
The Sabbath e'er should be ;
And every man
By this God's plan
From labor should be free.

But they who hold,
So we are told,
The plan o' our redemption,
Must work the same
In their own name,
Nor find the least exemption.

What shall we say
About the day,
If ministers who hold
The preachèd word
Ithers have heard,
Accept the meed o' gold,

And draw mair pay
Tenfold than they
O'er whom they 've such concern?
What odds there be,
A God might see,
But I ha'e yet to learn.

And if the work
In pew and kirk,
Shouting their anthems higher,

Be paid for there,
And they forswear
To pay the priest and choir, —

What sense 'd there be
To argue me
O'er such as these, I pray?
Each has a right
Of service quite
In his own time and way.

The preacher paid,
Need ne'er be 'fraid,
Molested he 'll ne'er be ;
The artisan
Should be a man,
And stand up just as free.

Let none decide,
Nor judge in pride
“ Meats, drinks, or holy days,
Or the new moon ; ”
Forget not soon
That Sabbaths are always

E'en made for man :
This was God's plan,
And not man for the day ;
This must be true,
At least to you,
For ever and for aye.

So let us learn,
To Nature turn,
God works through all her laws ;
Through day and night,
Darkness and light,
Great and eternal Cause.

The Sabbath sun
Shines on each one ;
Or the descending shower
Calls from the sod,
O child of God !
The sweet responsive flower.

Then ha'e no fear,
For God is near,
In human hearts to dwell ;
His word is writ,
Or some of it,
Within our souls as well.

Then this my plan, —
A day for man
O' rest and recreation.
God needeth none ;
All are his own,
O'er every tribe and nation.

FROM KITTY.

I WOULD send a little message to the earthland,
To all I dearly love ;
I would have them know how closely I stand,
Wherever they may rove.
I would have them know I love and cherish,
Every day and every hour,
With a love and fondness which are deathless,
And daily grow in power.

Oh ! life is beautiful in earthland,
But is never half so bright
As the place where now my spirit wanders
In the celestial light.
But I go not so far from the loved ones
But my spirit quick can fly,
If I see you in a moment's sorrow,
Or a tear bedims your eye.

O father, mother, dearly loved ones !
Kitty speaks this way to you
To tell you that she's ever with you,
Guarding all the journey through.
Oh, believe me ! — and I need n't ask it,
For you both know so well
I could not in spirit-life be happy,
Away from you to dwell.

So I shall watch you, watch you ever,
 Until the curtains rise
Of mist that hang before your vision,
 And you see with clearer eyes ;
Then you 'll know I 've walked together with you
 Through all the lonely day, —
You on one side the mist, and Kitty
 Never very far away.



TO MARION SKIDMORE.

FROM ROBERT BURNS.

FAIR is the earth in monie a place !
In all thy works, O God ! I trace
Divinest power, divinest grace ;
 But in this glen,
Fairest of all, a woman's face
 Calls me again.

I 've seen the same face monie a time
Lit with a radiance divine,
When gieing her some thought o' mine,
 Through human ways,
Which caused the light o' truth to shine
 With brighter rays.

So, Marion, I greet you then,
Not in the busy haunts of men,
But in this sacred spirit glen,
 Greet you once more ;
Gieing my hand to you again
 From this bright shore.

Hard hae ye toiled for monie a year,
Hae wiped frae monie a face the tear,
And brought to monie a heart guid cheer
 Through this yer meeting ;
Hae brought the other world sae near
 By angel greeting.

Sure monie a time o'er hill and glade,
By bubbling brook and forest shade,
I've heard the speeches ye hae made
 As fancy turns
To Scotia's hills and bonnie braes,
 And Robert Burns.

I know the love your heart bears me,
I understand the mystic key
Of life's eventful destiny, —
 Links in a chain ;
What now your spirit cannot see,
 Time will explain.

So wait upon the shores of time, ·
Work out life's problem all divine,
And step by step the ladder climb
 To heights above ;
And o'er thy spirit ever shine,
 The light of love ;

And in the new home growing here, —
Type of the one in that bright sphere
That seems so far, yet is so near, —
 I only pray
There cometh to you all guid cheer
 From day to day.

Earth-land is not so far away
From sunny heights of endless day
That mortals ever need to pray
 To those arisen,
Save as a soul in silence may,
 From out its prison.

And often when your spirit spurns
The gross of earth, and sadly turns
To higher life, or even years
 To be set free, —
Then call again for Robert Burns,
 Or think of me.

CASSADAGA, *August*, 1887.

TO CLARA.

[Among the severest trials arising from my public work was the necessary separation from my then "little girl," as the itinerant work made it quite impossible for her to be with me sometimes for a year and a half and two years at a time. I could only be reconciled to this by trusting implicitly to those who cared for us both, and who, it seemed to me at times, almost miraculously preserved us. The following poems have been given to me for her, and sent to her at intervals during those long days which fortunately — at least for the present — are at an end.]

How oft in my thoughts you are with me,
Wherever my wanderings may be ;
And no place 'mid life's busy turmoil,
But something reminds me of thee.

Sometimes 't is a voice full of laughter
Which I catch as I pass along ;
Sometimes a form, or sweet girlish face,
Or the notes of an old-time song.

Then the voice, the song, and the laughter
Ring out like the tones of a bell,
While thoughts of the past, the present, and you,
Creep over my heart like a spell.

This morning a sweet clover blossom,
Pink-tinted and fragrant with dew,
Was to me as God's sweet evangel,
To make me think, darling, of you.

So love is undying and dauntless,
Wherever I wander below ;
She 'll bridge the wide gulf that 's between us,
You 're with me wherever I go.

Angels guard you, as angels may,
Ever keeping you day by day !
Is mother's prayer ;
Helping you ever to do the right,
Leading you into the purest light,
With kindly care.

When in the journey of life we find
Earthly trials are left behind,
We 'll soar above,
There to wander in infinite light,
No more darkness, and no more night,
But perfect love.

Oh what pleasure must there then be,
From earth's shackles the soul set free
For evermore !
Our light barque borne on the silvery tide,
Landing at last on the " summer side "
Of that bright shore.

ON HER SEVENTEENTH BIRTHDAY.

CLARA, my darling, I'm thinking of you,
And the day o' it seems long ago, —
A dot of a baby was laid in my arms,
Sweet and pure as the drifted snow.

Thinking, alas ! of the days that are sad,
And the days that were happy too,
When I gathered the dear little one in my arms,
And kissed it, my baby true.

Long are the days that have passed since that time,
And I wipe now a falling tear ;
Others have failed of the love that was mine :
My baby's grows stronger each year.

I breathe now a prayer to the angels on high,
Oh keep her, I pray you, in love !
Forbid Sorrow's tear should e'er dim her eye,
The thorns from her pathway remove !

May life in future grow radiantly bright,
And as pure as a fairy's dream ;
On thy pathway fall no shadows of night,
My darling, now sweet seventeen !

JANUARY, 1882.

THE snow is falling fast to-day,
And clouds o'erhang the sky ;
But heavier clouds are in our hearts,
For we must say " Good-bye."
But be of cheer, though tears must fall
Like the descending snow ;
God and the angels watch o'er all,
Wherever we may go :
And by and by, in his good time,
The clouds will break, the sun will shine.

THERE cometh a time to thy life so drear,
When the clouds which now hold thee in doubt and fear
At last shall be lifted.
Peace ! peace ! shall be heard by thy troubled soul,
The waves of adversity cease to roll
Where thy bark has drifted.

Dost thou dream that thy wishes have never been heard,
The longings and yearnings which oft have stirred
In thy heart ne'er broken ?
Thou canst not conceal it, though hard thou shouldst try, —
The bitter heart-ache and the yearning cry,
With the word unspoken.

As soul speaks to soul in some quiet hour,
As thought answers thought by some subtle power,
 We commune day by day ;
By laws that unite us, powers that control,
Still silent voices that speak to the soul —
 So we evermore may.

So I bid thee look up and never repine,
For beyond the dark clouds the stars still shine ;
 And it shall surely be
That the mists shall roll from the upper blue,
The bright star of hope shine forth to the view
 As a day-star to thee.



THE SILVER WEDDING.

[The following poem, addressed to Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Nudd on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding-day, is but a small tribute to those ever-faithful friends, to whom my debt of gratitude can never be paid unless by that Higher Power which never fails to reward the faithful.]

TWENTY-FIVE years you celebrate
Of life you 've walked together,
With its sunshine and its shadows,
Pleasant and stormy weather.

Its burdens you have learned to bear
With full and equal measure ;
And hand to hand and heart to heart,
Enjoyed its every pleasure.

And when the clouds, that thick above
Obscure the sun's fair shining,
You looked beyond, by power of love,
You saw its silver lining.

Surely the gods did love you well
When through life's crystal water
They searched to find the pearl of price,
And brought your loving daughter.

And still to fill your cup of bliss
Full running o'er with joys,
They brought from out the fount of life
Your own, your darling boys.

And then, to make life's chain complete,
Its lights and shadows even,
They took you where life's waters meet,
And called one back to heaven.

Thus life becomes more beautiful,
Light breaketh from afar,
And him you deemed as lost to earth
Becomes your guiding star.

Now may your Silver Wedding be
Bright as the stars above,
With silvery thoughts of joy and peace,
And silvery chords of love.

And through the future may these grow
Bright, as the years grow old,
Until the SILVER of your life
Shall turn to purest GOLD.



IN SICKNESS.

I AM coming a moment in spirit
To sit down close by you now ;
Say, dear, can you see I am with you,
With my hand on your fevered brow ?

And there is such music above us,
I hear such sweet sounds in the air,
That I know all the dear ones who love us
Are here with their angelic care !

There are stars of pure radiance and whiteness,
There are eyes shining out on us so,
That I feel the dear angels above us
Are kinder than ever we know.

Then cheer up ! for they guard and are keeping
O'er you every moment and hour
Such vigils ; while earth ones are sleeping,
We 'll trust in their wonderful power.

And know, that whatever betide us
In sickness, in sorrow, or pain,
Though the clouds may hang heavy above us,
The sun will shine brightly again !

And now, while life's threads you are spinning,
The sombre, the white, and the gold,
Twice ten and a one you have counted,
And the skein in your fingers you hold.

Then look at its shading, my darling ;
Though dull threads you are spinning to-day,
The skein of life's thread you hold in your hands
Has more of the gold than the gray.

And at last, when the threads are all woven
In life's magic web, we may see,
In the warp and the woof of the future,
Why the dull threads were given to thee.

Or perhaps, like the beautiful fable
Which I read of the Norsemen of old,
Some angel of light will touch the strange web,
And the dull threads will all turn to gold !

TO LOTTIE NUDD,

ON HER NINETEENTH BIRTHDAY.

SOMETIMES the angels come to earth
With treasures bright and fair,
And, smiling, leave their brightest gems
Entrusted to our care.

So nineteen years ago to-day
A band of angels bright
Came to our earth, wending their way
From out the fields of light.

And as they came, with smiles of love
The leader of the band
Held, as a token from above,
A rosebud in his hand.

He smiled as if he scarcely knew
Where to bestow such charms ;
Then, with a loving look on you,
Pressed close to mamma's arms,

And dropped this treasure from above,
That while the years may roll,
Shall ever bless her with its love, —
A spotless human soul.

I wonder if he knew how we
Should love the darling one?
Or does he wait near earth to see
The good that he has done?

Then let us thank'the angel band
Who've loved and blessed us so,
That came to earth from Summer-Land
Just nineteen years ago.

Then we will ask the angels too,
Throughout the coming years,
For their protective care for you,
Our rosebud of the spheres !



LIFE'S MYSTERY.

TRAVELLING along the dusty road,
Laying aside life's weary load;
I pondered. And is this the all of man,
Ending the journey where it began?
A breath, a moment, and we were not ;
Another, — a tombstone marks the spot
Where rests the body, so useless grown,
Unfit for life's burdens we've laid it down
Again, and I wonder *can* this be all?
A blossom of life to wither and fall, —

To fall as a leaf from a fading tree,
Forgotten as soon as we cease to be !
A moment, a breath, and away we go !
Whither, ah ! whither, does any one know ?
No portion of time but can tell the tale.
A mourner mourneth ! we list to the wail,
Look on him with pity, then pass him by
With only a thought, a tear, and a sigh.
Another rises, and smiling will say,
"A child is born ! I am happy to-day."
Another is wringing his hands in tears ;
Perhaps a score or two of years
His life has measured, and left no trace
Of care or trouble on brow or face ;
But now a sickly, wan, faded smile
A little while longer the beauties beguile,
Then cast away a heart brave and true
For a faithless lover — and fortune too.
So children are born, old men pass away.
We have our short span, it is only a day !
We coo as a baby, cry as a child.
If petted and pampered, have laughed and have smiled ;
If scolded and crossed, wronged and defeated,
Fought where we could, where not, have retreated.
At last, ere we know, have stepped off the stage,
Pushed through our ills, or the door of old age.
Go on, life endeth ! and where are we ?
The pauper, the merchant, their souls both free ;
A moment, an hour, and time is no more !
They both pass unheeded an open door.

Death, thou art ever a monster grim
Until thou art witnessed by both of them ;
Then do they find thou 'rt an angel bright,
Leading the soul through the gates of light.
Go in, strange spirit, nor fear thy doom !
Ever a welcome, and always room.
The river of death is no gulf so wide,
As many have dreamed it, nor surging tide ;
It is, after all, but a narrow stream
Bridged and made safe by love's golden beam.
And walking along by the river shore
Are the loved of earth who have gone before.
They show us the pebbles beneath our feet ;
We hear the ripple of waters sweet ;
It takes away the shrinking and dread,
For the land of the *living*, and *not* the dead,
We see at last on the farther shore,
While white hands welcome and beckon us o'er.
And at this moment supreme we see
Unlocked the door of life's mystery,
And these queries at last are understood,
Seen in the light of infinite good.
We know then " the Way, the Truth, and the Life,"
Fathom the why of this discord and strife,
Know that, compared to eternity's dower,
Earth life 's a mount, a breath, or a flower !
Servants of good are our ills and our pains,
Summed up at last are our infinite gains.

A DANDELION.

A DANDELION's fuzzy head,
One pleasant summer morning,
I gathered from my flower-bed
Just as the day was dawning.

It stood there just the night before,
In a jacket bright as gold ;
And here within a single night
My gallant had grown old.

How strangely like the flowers are we !
One moment bright and gay ;
Then sorrow touches with its wand,
And we grow old and gray.



TO A WILD VIOLET.

[Picking a wild violet, the first in the spring-time, and almost under the frost and snow, these words came to me :]

WHERE did you come from, floweret bright?
Out of the darkness into the light ;
Out of the damp dark mould and clay
Into the sunlight, into the day.

Who called you up so early in spring?
Who gave the color to each bright wing?
Or is there a voice within your soul
That bids you rise as the seasons roll?
And thus we see, as we pass along,
Your sweet face with the robin's first song.



SNOW.

At night I looked forth on the earth,
The leaves lay all withered and dead,
Or were hurriedly tossed here and there, back and forth,
By the cold piercing winds blowing up from the north,
Which gave us a feeling of dread.

The fields lay all naked and bare,
The trees stripped of leaflet and bloom ;
And I saw as I gazed on the scene here and there,
Where but late had been beauty and verdure most rare,
Were cast desolation and gloom.

I woke in the morning, and lo !
I saw as I opened the door,
A veil of rare whiteness ; pure and glittering snow
Fell and covered each unsightly object as though
'T would shield them from gaze evermore.

Was anything ever so clean?
Not even a track to be seen!
Each fence-post was crowned with the snow that was on it;
The old pump was wearing a lovely snow-bonnet,
And looked like a regal queen.



THE BIBLE.

[The following lines were written on hearing a Radical discussion on the Bible as the only true word of God:]

WELL, what in the world is the matter,
When people are getting to say,
Of things heretofore held as sacred,
Such things as men list to to-day?
They said that a bible was written
In Egypt long, long years before
Our own Christian era, — they ventured
A round twenty thousand or more;

Compared with which ours is but recent.
We always have heard them declare
That because it had lived all these ages
Was positive proof of God's care.
Surely this world must be older by far
Than this record shows it to be,
And if wrong in this thing, why not others? —
A serious question, you see.

To hear such extravagant stories,
You 'd certainly think they were wild ;
To say it contained contradictions,
Was using a term that was mild.
Then they carried us back in our fancy
To far away Niocene priests,
And gave us a glimpse of their doings
With no flattering unction, at least.

Then they held to our view such a picture
Of Eden, the serpent, and sin,
How the serpent beguiled our fair mother,
And knowledge and wisdom came in, —
Till to me it seemed really a blessing,
And I thanked mother Eve o'er and o'er,
While I fell quite in love with the devil, —
A thing never dreamed of before.

Then they said the Church 'd been revising
This time-honored book, by the way ;
That the word of God needed amendment
By wiseacres living to-day.
Then it needs only use of our reason,
For palpably clear can we see
That a book which contains much of error
Is not what a bible should be.

Ah ! 't is well that the people are daring
Thus boldly to speak what they find,

For truth is the gem we are seeking,
And error must go to the wind.
Whether found 'tween the lids of a bible,
Or declared from the pulpit by men,
Where error is, wise ones denounce it,
And seek for the truth yet again.

And truth is God's bible eternal, —
In wonderful chapters 't is told ;
While all of its great revelations
Are not clasped by silver or gold.
Its leaves are the bed-rock of Nature,
And star-spangled archway of heaven ;
And slowly as man learns to read them,
Its wonderful chapters are given.



THE WORTHY PROFESSOR.

'MID the councils of men I have noticed of late
A gentleman sober in mien,
Whose bearing is dignified, manners sedate,
His countenance calm and serene.
He rises as one who is used to command,
Then quietly gazes around,
As though for the right determined to stand,
A monument stern and profound.

"'T is really too solemn, my friends," he remarks ;

"Searching for truth, I assure you,
Is too sacred a matter to trifle with, so

List to my words I adjure you.

Another thing, friends, is, this search after truth

Needs your entire attention ;

Your time is too precious, too arduous your task,

Our faults and errors to mention."

Never fear, worthy friend, there is plenty of time, —

Rest easy on that score, I pray.

As a dark starless night, or a black, threatening cloud

Contrasts with a clear summer's day,

So will all these old errors you wish to ignore,

If properly held up to sight,

Make by contrast more beauteous the truth to appear,

More glorious the on-coming light.

"There's no system so perfect but fault may be found,"

He says, and with this we agree ;

But are we to fold our hands idly and reason,

"'T is well enough, so let it be ?"

Or shall we, after finding that errors are here,

Stand up firm and strong on our feet,

And with hands swift and willing, made free for the task,

Sift out worthless chaff from the wheat ?

If a system be perfect, no harm can accrue

From searching and free criticism ;

And if not, let it suffer, as suffer it will, —
 A nation, religion, or "ism ;"
 Then sail on, Ship of Progress, though strong be the tide,
 And mountainous waves will oppose,
 Nought can hinder your course, for a favoring gale
 Strong, steady, unerringly blows.



ON THE TRANSITION OF MRS. ELIZABETH
 WISEWELL,

WIFE OF GENERAL M. N. WISEWELL, WHO DEPARTED
 THIS LIFE NOV. 5, 1880.

We knew her spirit was wending its way
 Out to the regions of infinite day,
 As the earthly clouds were rifted ;
 We heard not the sound of the boatman's oar
 As he silently came from the other shore :
 Yet her soul from earth has drifted.

I wonder, did she see the boatman pale,
 Did she hear the flutter of each white sail
 As the Angel of Life did wait?
 Did she hear his voice and heed the same?
 Did he speak, I wonder, her angel name
 As she entered the beautiful gate?

Did she see him smile as he held in hand
Her glittering crown from the spirit land, —

The crown of life immortal?

And did the loved who had gone before
From our homes on earth to the evermore,
Meet her at life's sunny portal?

Was it this that touched with a halo of grace
And left the glory-light on her face,

When "Mamma's Bessie" was dying?

Did she leave this token that we might see
What a glorious thing it was to be,
As her soul from earth was flying?

Will she miss, I wonder, our earthly care
In the home of the angels "over there;"

Or long, in that home above,

To leave for a moment that land of bliss?
Will she not sometimes look back to this,
And wish for our earthly love?

Does she know we miss her, and can she tell,
In that pure spot where her soul must dwell,

The depth of our bitter sorrow?

Does she know that the days seem almost years,
And our eyes look up through the burning tears
As we think of the long to-morrow?

And 'mid the visions that met her eyes
And filled her soul with a sweet surprise
From the land of the pure and blest,

'Mid all the hosts of the shining ones
Who greeted her from their heavenly homes,
Was our Allie among the rest?

Do they walk together the golden strand
To view the scenes of the Summer Land
In the garden of life above?
And are they breathing the fragrance rare
Of the beautiful flowers perfuming the air
In the fields of Infinite Love?

As I listen I hear a sweet voice say,
In her old-time, quiet, pleasant way,
"Not dead, only gone before you!
And the sweetest pleasure that life can give
Is to know, when Death comes I live, still live,
And my loving care is o'er you!"



SEED-SOWING.

MAN here is ever given a soul to till,
As though 't were human soil, this human will.
Till it with care, O friends! beware of weeds.
Till it with care, O friends! choose well the seeds, —
Of human kindness, love, and noble deeds.
Of human kindness sow a good supply;
Of useful knowledge place a mint on high;
For these are things which never can be lost.
Sow them, my friends, I pray, whate'er the cost!

BIRDS.

WHEN I hear the wild birds singing
All their merry, happy song ;
When I hear their music ringing
All the woods and hills along, —

Then I wonder, oh ! can ever
Mortals hear a sweeter sound
Till they cross the shining river,
Where the choirs of heaven are found ?

In the springtime how they warble
Forth their tiny notes of glee !
Singing happily and wildly :
Love, their message seems to be.

They sing again ; and this I deem
The burden of their song :
“ Get up ! to work ! be quick ! be quick !
The days are not too long ! ”

At night they warble sweetly,
Lowly whispering their love ;
And our thoughts, in sweet communion,
By their tones are borne above.

INTEMPERANCE.

WHILE wrapped in meditation,
Lost to all else beside,
A vision was before me spread,
Extending far and wide ;

O'er all our fair and happy land,
Of which we proudly boast,
From sunny southern clime to north,
And fair Pacific's coast, —

Yea, spreading farther, wider,
By mountain, glen, and lea ;
It crossed the ocean too, and reached
To lands beyond the sea.

Millions of human souls were seen
In one uprising mass
Before my spirit's vision, while
Amazement held me fast ;

For out of all this wondrous throng, —
Millions of souls and more, —
Not one before my vision passed
Unstained ! These marks they bore, —

The marks of woe, the marks of pain,
 Of poverty and sin ;
 Deep-stained marks of Intemperance, —
 A monster old and grim !

He drags his victims from among
 The fairest in our land.
 Statesmen and rulers, high and low,
 Touched by his subtle wand,

Alike fall victims, and will do
 The deed they most despise.
 He 'll make of kings the veriest serfs,
 And fools e'en of the wise !

In every clime o'er all our earth,
 Where dwells the human race,
 In many of our brightest homes
 He creepeth in apace.

In lowly cot of laborer,
 In palaces of kings,
 He steps, and all this train of woe
 Inevitably brings.

To our homes he comes, the husband takes,
 Father or sons away ;
 Leaves them, our heart's best idols,
 All crushed like the potter's clay !

Crushed by a monster daring,
Stung by a viper dread,
All shame, all sense of honor,
Truth, love, and virtue dead.

What more can be done? Its evils
Are of the greatest weight.
Sin and woe, grief and pain, murder
As by the hand of fate,

In letters of black are written.
May the vision, I pray,
Change, and this night of darkness
Be turned to brightest day !

Pray? Vain are prayers of women :
Have they not prayed for years?
Sent up the heart's deep anguish,
Smothered in burning tears?

Have n't little brown feet prayed,
Out on the pavements bare,
Shiv'ering with cold and hunger,
A pleading, voiceless prayer?

Mothers, wives, and sweethearts, all
Prayed again and again?
But vain are prayers of women,
Vain are the laws of men.

This sin will ne'er be vanquished
Till all are made to know
Our deeds become a part of us,
Follow where'er we go.

Though others might forgive us,
There's something that's within,
Wherever we may find ourselves,
Reminding us of sin.

'T is Memory ; and while she turns
Her many pictures o'er,
Still shows us sometimes what we were,
Upon this mortal shore.

And if we 'd have these pictures
Such as we 'd like to see, —
From dark lines of deep regret
Kept spotless, pure, and free, —

Then we must live righteously,
Keep our lives pure and clean,
Rather than trusting ever
To what another's been.

For we are temple-builders,
While toiling in the clay,
Fitting immortal spirits
For an eternal day.

And if we give our children
An heritage of woe,
They bear it with them ; — 't is their hell
Wherever they may go.

Or if we wisely give them
A heritage of peace,
They carry this, — it is their heaven,
And ever will increase.

Know, then, at the root of the tree
There lies the hidden power,
Determining for the future,
If fruit be sweet or sour.

We gather no figs of thistles,
No grapes of thorny tree ;
Whatever has been our sowing,
That will the harvest be.



A HUNDRED YEARS TO COME.

A QUEER old staggering, tottering man
Came up the street at night,
And looked with a bewildered gaze
On the electric light.
He rubbed his eyes, then looked again ;
Said he, " What will be done,

If things go on at this strange rate,
A hundred years to come?

"Now while I'm here," the old man said,
"I have a great desire
To see that funny talking thing,
The telegraphic wire.
Where have I been? I must have slept
While these queer things were done.
Woman will cease her talking, sure,
A hundred years to come!"

Then on he went, until he stood
Beside a railroad train.
He looked, and laughed, ha, ha, ha, ha!
With all his might and main.
The whistle shrieked, the man did too, —
"How does this queer thing run?
Ha, ha, ha, ha! what won't they do
A hundred years to come?"

"I'll go to church," the old man said,
"For I should like to know
If they are teaching what they did
A hundred years ago."
He rubbed his hands and loudly laughed
At what had here been done;
Said he, "There'll be no priestly rule
A hundred years to come."

" Hurrah for steam, electric light,
The telephone as well !
Theology's all upside down, —
What more, I scarce can tell.
Magnetic wires now span the earth, —
Much has, I think, been done."
He laughed, and said, " I 'll visit you
A hundred years to come."



A CRYSTAL MORNING.

RAIN had fallen through the night,
Kissed by frost to purest white ;
Every leaflet, blade, and fen
Sparkled like a diadem.

Many-tinted drops of rain,
Frozen on the window-pane,
Or suspended here and there,
Seemed to fill the very air.

Every limb on every tree
All transformed appeared to be
Into prisms bright and fair,
Rainbow-tinted everywhere.

May can come with all her flowers,
Filling all her happy hours ;
June, with roses sweet and bright,
And her lilies, pure and white ;

Autumn with her leaves of gold,
Symbol of the year grown old, —
Growing brighter day by day
As they fade and pass away.

But no morn such pleasure brings,
Coming on with viewless wings,
Passing silently away,
'Thout a semblance of decay.



THE MINISTRY OF PAIN,

GIVEN IMPROMPTU AT THE CLOSE OF A LECTURE IN MINNE-
APOLIS, OCTOBER, 1885.

I SAW a strong man racked with pain,
And sought to comfort him in vain.
Struggling, it seemed he scarcely knew
Which way to turn, or what to do ;
And watching with him for a while,
I scarcely could repress a smile, —
His face a look rebellious wore,
While of his pain he cursed and swore.

And then he struggled, tossed, and groaned,
With every breath his fate bemoaned.
Hours, days, and weeks rolled by again :
I watched the ministry of pain.
Humbled at last, then, by its power,
Unfolding like a rare, sweet flower,
Came hidden treasures of the soul, —
Humility and self-control.

And listening for a moment there,
I heard him breathe an earnest prayer,
Softened, subdued, it seemed to me,
Even by pain's harsh ministry.
I watched unfoldment there, and saw
The beauty of divinest law, —
That pain and sorrow e'en may be
A blessing to humanity.

Patient, submissive, then I find
A cultivated, placid mind ;
And after years I walked that way
I did not hear him curse or pray,
But a philosopher I saw
Who read in all kind Nature's law.
So hidden there may sometimes be
Far sweeter flowers than those we see.

And in the depths of ocean's bed
Ofttimes rarest gems are hid ;

And souls have hidden far from sight
Their diamond rays of purest light, —
Till pain has polished, hewn, and wrought
These diamonds from the coarse clay brought ;
And then we find that not in vain
Has been the ministry of pain.



EASTER.

'T WAS Easter morning, bright and clear ;
All seemed to feel that spring was here :
 The sun shone bright and fair ;
A deep blue mantle overhead
Where not a single cloud was spread,
 And joy was everywhere.

Around us in the air was heard
The sweetest song of early bird
 In joyous Easter lays ;
The robin opened up his throat,
And shouted forth in clearest note
 His sweetest song of praise.

The women started out in flocks
To worship God in new spring frocks, —
 New mantle, shawl, or wrap ;

For 't would n't be the thing at all
Upon his holy name to call,
Without an Easter hat.

True, lowly to the earth he came,
Nor sought for worldly wealth or fame, —
But things have changed, you know.
Now, he who lowly on the earth
Walked among men of humble birth
Is praised through pomp and show.

In costly temples, rearing high
Their glittering domes toward the blue sky,
The worshippers are found ;
Loud anthems rise upon the air,
And Easter flowers are everywhere,
For wealth and pride abound.

Where are the lowly and the poor?
Some of them stand outside the door,
And look with eager eye,
Wishing perhaps they too might be
As rich as some of these they see,
Who pass them proudly by.

I wonder if the Nazarene
Could step out from behind the screen,
Revealed to mortal eyes ;
Or come upon the earth once more
As humbly as he came before, —
Would there not be surprise?

Would he in all this pomp and pride
Which marks the hour at Easter-tide,
 Would he feel quite at home?
Would they who now accord him praise,
And loudly shout their Easter lays,
 Know that their Lord had come?

Were Magdalena by his side,
Would there be Pharisaic pride,
 I wonder, as before?
And if he stood in her defence
Upbraiding for their false pretence,
 Would they all praise the more?

Would the sandal-footed stranger,
Born, they tell us, in a manger,
 If on the earth again,
Be found e'en as he was before,
Standing outside the temple door
 Among the lowly men?

Or if he entered it at all,
T' would be to make their idols fall,
 And shock the money-changers,
Who by their sham and make-believes
Had made his place a den of thieves,
 Who to the truth are strangers.

THE TUMBLE-WEED.

[The following was suggested when I first saw this peculiar weed on the prairies of Dakota.]

No thing in all Nature, philosophers say,
But what has its place and does good in its way,
And nothing created by Dame Nature's hand
But somehow will show forth her purposes grand.
Still others contend that God rules o'er all,
Takes notes of our lives and the tiny bird's fall ;
And whatever we find by Nature expressed
Is but the fulfilment of his high behest.

Be that as it may, there are some things, I find,
Which are not very clear, — at least to my mind.
While walking alone 'cross the prairie one night,
I started a moment almost in a fright ;
For something, it seemed rolled up in a bundle,
Was coming that way fast as it could tumble :
It rolled o'er and o'er, it turned round and round,
It flew without wings, it walked without sound.

A figure, a phantom, whate'er it might be,
I halted a moment, determined to see.
When lo ! I beheld one of Dame Nature's weeds
Borne out by the breezes to scatter its seeds.

Why don't the potatoes just open their eyes,
Start out in this way, and give man a surprise ;

And like this strange weed when the prairie winds blow,
Roll into some snug little corner to grow?
And why does n't Dame Nature just furnish some shears
To each blade of corn just to cut its own ears?
And why don't the apples grow up in a year
As well as the pumpkins on these prairies here?
Or why don't the seeds of the fruit-bearing trees
Come tumbling along on the wings of the breeze?

Why don't all the good things that God holds in store
Start out on such wings for the needy and poor?
And, borne by the winds, tumble down at the feet
Of the hungry of earth, that each one might eat?
Oh ! you funny old weed, I saw you at last
Caught in your own meshes and firmly held fast, —
One over the other rolled up and piled high,
Then thrown in the ditch by the winds sweeping by.

While one other, poor thing ! had soared still higher,
Was caught on the fangs of a cruel barbed wire.
So I thought, with evil 't is ever just so
In the lives that we lead, with the wrong that we do.
'T is the nature of wrong, sin, malice, and hate :
Each brings compensation unerring as fate ;
And sooner or later, though many years hence,
Hangs by its own weight on some barbed wire fence.

THE GOLDEN SOMETIME.

[The following lines were improvised upon the occasion of the eighteenth anniversary of the wedded life of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac S. McCracken, Cincinnati, July 1, 1886. The thought was suggested by singing the hymn "In the Beautiful Sometime."]

Do you ask for the Golden Sometime,
Do you look so far away,
When you have the Golden Present,
And the love that 's yours to-day?

Do you look to the distant future,
Or through the aisles of the past?
Then over eighteen years to-night
My vision I too will cast.

In the flush of youthfulness you stand,
Nor gaze then so far away,
But satisfied with the happiness
And love that was yours that day.

Then hand in hand you 've been walking
Through these eighteen years, till now
You are standing upon the summit,
And the silver crowns your brow.

Home and friends are yours, with the blessings
Of happiness, joy, and grace,
As you sit in the Golden Present
With love's light on each face.

Then why should I ask of the Father,
Or Angel Powers above,
To give you greater blessings,
Or increase your gift of love?

No ! But that home and friends and plenty,
As the present holds in store,
Be yours through the days of the future,
O Angels ! we ask no more.

Then until we stand on life's summit,
And eternity crowns each brow,
While we wait for the Golden Sometime,
We 'll enjoy the good time now.



CHARLIE'S FIRST LETTER.

[The following lines relate to an incident which occurred in the home of Mrs. Ruffin in Cincinnati, Ohio, soon after Mr. Ruffin passed to the spirit-life. Little Charlie, a neighbor's child who was with them daily, and who loved Mr. Ruffin very dearly, had received his first letter.]

ONCE a bright-eyed little fellow, —
Scarcely three years was he then, —
With a look as grave and earnest
Even as the grown-up men,

Stood beside an open window,
With his hand outstretched above :
On it was an open letter,
Sent by one he 'd learned to love.

Oh ! his face then was a picture,
Shining radiant and bright,
Eagerness and expectation
Making it aglow with light.

Earth has nothing fairer, brighter
Than the faith of childhood's hours,
Throwing out its fragrance o'er us
Like the perfume of sweet flowers.

Trusting and confiding ever
In the lessons we impart,
They are " real, they are earnest,"
To the trusting little heart.

And while Charlie missed among them
One he 'd dearly loved before,
And they 'd talked to him of heaven,
Told the story o'er and o'er

How the spirit lived forever
In a land of perfect love,
And when asking where ? they answered,
" Oh ! that land is up above."

So when little heart grew happier
With its joy than it could hold,
Went as near as he could think of,
To that land of which they 'd told.

Then when asked, "What are you doing?"
With his bright face all aglow,
"Oh ! I 'm holding it toward heaven,
So 'at Mr. Ruffin can know !"

Oh ! for the sweet faith of childhood,
To turn to the better land
And believe the loved ones near us
Can see and can understand.

Let 's keep the soul-windows open,
Which lead to the realms above,
And reach toward the heavenly kingdom, —
'T will bring the response of love.

And like the little one waiting,
Looking up at close of day,
Find as we look through those windows
That heaven 's not far away.

AN IMPROVISATION,

ON RECEIVING A GIFT OF FLOWERS AT THE HORTICULTURAL
HALL, BOSTON.

ONCE when the earth was brown and sere and cold
(So memory brings to me this legend old),
An angel, seeing all the earth so bare,
Asked of the weary mortals dwelling there
What blessing they would like her to bestow
E'er she from earthland must forever go.
"Ask what thou wilt now, for 't is given me,
One blessing only to bestow on thee."
As if with one accord they all replied :
"We would not, dare not, for ourselves decide.
Needing so much, we might not ask aright, —
The best of all to make our earthland bright.
Let it be thine, O angel from above !
To make this then thine own free gift of love."
Then slowly o'er the earth they saw her pass,
Spreading beneath their feet the velvet grass ;
And passing over this her angel hand,
Bright flowers came springing up o'er all the land.
And thus to brighten earth the angel powers
Had stooped to bless us with the gift of flowers.
None sweeter, fairer, brighter, ever can
Be offered us by angels, God, or man.

WRINKLES.

I LOOKED in the mirror a moment,
As I chanced to be standing near,
And scarce could believe my own eyesight,
As I counted the wrinkles there.
Then I smote my own face in my anger,
To think what a fool I must be
To let the false friendships and trials
Of earth leave such shadows with me.

Then I pinched and powdered and dusted,
Till my face fairly smarted with pain.
“O fool!” said I, “what are you doing, —
Are you trying your youth to regain?”
Then I felt so ashamed for a moment
That I blushed to the roots of my hair :
Creeping over my face like a mantle,
The roses of youth were all there.

And thus of myself I then queried,
“Should I be ashamed to have cried,
When those I have trusted have failed me,
And others I cherished have died?
Should I ask you to cease then your writing,
O Angel of Time ! with your pen ;
Or the hours of my long-vanished girlhood,
Should I ask you to bring them again ?”

Ah ! no ; for with these I have counted,
 Where suffering and sorrow I trace.
 There are other things, now looking closer,
 Which have left their lines, too, on my face, —
 There are lines that are left there by laughter,
 The tenderer lines left by love,
 And the firm ones by strong resolutions
 To conquer, and thus rise above.

It may be Nature leaves these as lessons
 That I may read over again,
 That I may not repeat the same follies
 Which left there their life-lines of pain ;
 And it may be that this is her signal, —
 And I think this is nearer the truth, —
 They're the ripening signs of the spirit
 For the land of perennial youth.



“GOD'S FINGER TOUCHED HIM, AND
 HE SLEPT.”

[The following lines were improvised at Berkeley Hall, Boston, the subject being given by Mrs. Wellington, whose brother had just passed to the higher life. One of the floral offerings contained as an inscription the line which she gave as a subject for a poem.]

“He slept,” did he, sister? Oh, no ! he awoke
 To the light of eternity's morning ;
 And the angel that touched was the angel of life, —
 The herald of light that was dawning.

And he whispered : " My brother, arise and away,
For this is the dawning of life's brightest day.
Then out in the morning ; out toward the sun,
Which for thee hath arisen, — for life thou hast won.
'T was the body that slept, — that, cold, still, and white,
Was taken and tenderly hidden from sight
Beneath the still earth ; for the spirit no more
Needs its vesture of clay, but from yonder green shore
Looks back well content that, in grasses and flowers,
It should rise up again ; while with far greater powers,
With glorified body, immortal and pure,
Most swift to accomplish, most strong to endure,
The spirit rejoices for ever and aye !
Then say not thy brother is sleeping to-day.
'T is not hope that is ours, but assurance is given ;
'T is not faith, 't is not trust, but a knowledge of heaven.
Then, looking around upon this world of ours,
Where briers and thorns strangely mix with the flowers,
Whatever of errors or faults we recall,
Let charity's mantle still cover them all ;
For we know that on rising to that region bright
Where darkness gives place unto knowledge and light,
Each soul shall go onward in wisdom and love
Till it shines like a star in the kingdom above,
And glad songs of triumph by all shall be given
For the touch of the finger that leads them to heaven."

REST.

IN REPLY TO "UNREST," BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

Is rest, then, so wondrous a blessing
That wisdom's pursuit we 'll forego,
Lest we find that unrest in possessing
Which keeps us still wanting to know?
And of so little value is truth
That we then should give up the quest,
Clinging still to the faith of our youth,
For fear we shall walk with unrest?

Are you sure that "the dead lock the portals"?
That "he who breaks through is a thief"?
That such knowledge, if found by us mortals,
The finding would bring us to grief?
Might not the same hand then, I wonder,
That closed the door, open it wide?
And we have no "ill-gotten plunder"
In a view from the fair "other side"?

Would the eagle be "happier lowly,"
Content with not soaring too much,
Or find the clear air of high heaven
Too pure for his bright wings to touch?

Would ocean still be the old ocean
If no wave ever rippled its breast,
Or hushed were its music and motion,
Instead of its ceaseless unrest?

There is joy beyond all comprehension
(Contentment, in truth, must increase)
In fulfilling the soul's high intention, —
There rolls the deep river of peace.
There 's rest comes of active endeavor, —
By this are all earnest ones blest ;
It comes to the sluggard soul never,
That always is sighing for rest.



DECORATION DAY.

[The subject of the following poem was given by the audience
in Berkeley Hall, Boston, May 29, 1887 :]

WILL you decorate to-morrow?
Weeping gently in her sorrow,
Nature, in advance of you,
Touched their graves with purest dew.

Will you decorate to-morrow?
Bending over them in sorrow,
Nature came there long ago,
Touched their graves with whitest snow.

Then underneath the cold white snow
She bade the sweet blue violets grow,
Kissed into sweetness by the sun,
That melted snow-wreaths for each one.

And now they bloom in beauty sweet, —
On lowly graves an offering meet :
Nature renewing day by day,
Lest some should fade and pass away.

And not a grave is left alone,
Though never marked by flag or stone ;
Nor one, but angels bend above,
And decorate with holy love.

So name your martyrs, drop your tear,
Stop in your hurrying life each year ;
Think of their sacrifice and woe,
Before you onward hastening go.

Pause for a moment, 'mid earth's din,
Thinking of those who died to win
The liberty you now enjoy,
The prosperous peace, and then employ

Your means on Decoration Day
To drive old poverty away
From homes the soldiers loved and left,
From lonely ones of care bereft.

Forget not those who still remain,
Walking with you the earthly plain :
All who have laid their knapsacks down
Do not yet wear the martyr's crown.

But some walk martyrs here below,
Bent with a weight of care and woe ;
So while you carry sweetest flowers,
And give to-morrow's brightest hours

To those who fell, as soldiers may,
Forget not those who live to-day,
Forget not those who linger here,
But let your loving-kindness cheer

Their rugged path with deeds of love,
And so bring joy to those above,
Who watch around their pathway still :
Then decorate the graves who will.

But rest assured, the kind deeds done
To those whose crowns are not yet won,
Will be a wreath of deathless flowers
To blossom in immortal bowers.

NANNIE.

[May 21, 1885, Sullivan's printing works, in Cincinnati, Ohio, were destroyed by fire, several lives being lost, among them that of Miss Nannie Shepherd. Her mother came to me one year later, on the anniversary of the event, with such a sad face as mothers alone carry as a testimonial of their mother-love when their hearts have been torn and their hopes crushed. She said, "But for Spiritualism I should have been insane. Even now I walk blocks, to avoid passing the place which has such power to torture me." My Guides gave the mother the following expression of her sadness:]

"SLOWLY, how slowly the hours roll by !

And even the days seem as years.

Dark is the way as we often try

To look up through our blinding tears.

It seems so long, yet we know to-night

'T is only one year to-morrow

Since through fire and peril you took your flight,

And left us this bitter sorrow.

"Little you knew as you left our home,

Trusting in joy and gladness,

That over our lives so soon must come

This terrible pall of sadness.

I try to forget that awful hour,

But its horrors will remind me, —

The very streets and the buildings have power

To call up the tears that blind me.

“ Oh ! shall I ever know joy again ?
Or rest or peace or pleasure
Come into our lives so full of pain
Since we lost our precious treasure ?
There 's nothing on earth now seems as bright,
E'en the stars seem laden and gray :
Nannie, you took with you our sunlight
When your spirit passed away.

“ I know that the deed which bereft us
Of our dear one we loved so well,
And in the dark valley has left us,
In sadness and sorrow to dwell,
At the same time took many another,
Unmindful of cries and of tears, —
That left there each heart-broken mother
To plod on through the weary years.

“ O angels of light ! O Power above,
Who watches with tender kindness !
Wilt thou give some token of thy love ?
Wilt thou heal our human blindness ?
O Nannie dear, and can you know,
In the place where your spirit lingers,
That every hour we miss you so,
And the touch of your busy fingers ?

“ Yes, never a moment, never a pain,
That comes to your heart of sorrow,

But finds in my spirit its sad refrain,
That even angels must borrow
From toilers of earth who journey below
In the valley of hope and sadness ;
Yet ever from each of these, you know,
We gather our notes of gladness.

“ I have learned the sweet songs of life to sing
In the land of life immortal ;
I have tasted the sweets that death may bring
As we pass through its shining portal.
I have learned 't is not all of life to live,
Nor all we call death is dying —
'T is only the power that it can give
To the soul in its upward flying.

“ It may be the flood, or the cyclone's breath,
Or huge billows of flame may roll :
Through these the body may taste of death,
But it never can touch the soul.
It rises triumphant, and soars above,
To dwell in the land eternal ;
We learn the lesson of infinite love,
We roam in the fields supernal.

“ Then look up, dear ones, and dry your tears,
And cease, if you can, your weeping,
And know that through all the coming years
My watch over you I 'm keeping.

Then do not think I am far away ;
I shall work and watch and wait,
I shall visit my loved ones every day
Till you enter the ' Beautiful Gate.' ”



THE WARP AND WOOF OF LIFE.

[Given impromptu at Berkeley Hall, Boston.]

SPINNING its web on a sunny strand,
As though on very air it could stand,
I watched a little spider one day
Backward and forward swinging away,
Till the mystical web grew in my sight,
Glistened and gleamed in the morning light.

I asked, as I saw its wonderful plan,
Could its design be excelled by man ?
As though 't were measured by compass or square,
He threw out his threads, and they caught on air ;
Then wove in for warp a thread so fine
That the web complete was a thing divine.

And I was watching him closely now,
For whence the material came, and how ;
And saw that he carried it all within,
For the golden web which I saw him spin,
Nature had placed in the tiny form
Something he carried through sunshine and storm,

Which he could throw out as a thing of light
On which he could climb to a greater height.
So we are weaving our web each day,
Bear our material in the same way.
Just within is the power we find
To weave the web of the human mind,

And to make it beautiful, clear, and bright,
As it hangs suspended in heaven's light,
Like the spider's web that I saw that day.
That it may reflect the sun's bright ray,
We must keep the material that's within
Spotless and pure, and free from sin.

The spider's web was perfect in plan.
I can but apply this lesson to man,
And believe that God has given each one
Something as perfect to yet be done.
It may be years as they slowly roll,
But God has placed it in every soul.

As the spider threw out its tiny line
Steadily upward I saw it climb ;
By its own power it rose above :
So must we rise by the power of love.
We throw it forth from the soul within,
And rising upon it are saved from sin.

In our warp and woof of life we find
There are colors dark with light combined,

And the lines of dark and cheerless gray,
 It may be, we 're weaving in to-day !
 They 'll mar its beauty, and, we are told,
 Must all be exchanged for threads of gold.

We shall want them all out, by and by,
 In the clearer light of the home on high ;
 So let 's weave the threads that shall brighter grow
 Through the countless ages our souls shall know ;
 For we carry with us to realms above
 Our warp and woof of the web of love.



LITTLE CHILDREN.

[In the course of an address at Berkeley Hall, Boston, it was said that no religion gave the truth in reference to the growth and development of children in the other life as clearly as Spiritualism does. At the close of the address a lady critic asked, "Has n't Christianity taught that all children will be saved? Did n't Christ say, 'Suffer little children to come unto me'?" The following answer was given impromptu.]

YES, our Elder Brother once said,
 "Let the children come to me ;
 For of such as these in spirit
 Shall the heavenly kingdom be."
 But now look on history's pages,
 Hear a Calvin say to man :
 "Children of the unregenerate
 Are outside salvation's plan !"

Then came the Wesleys, — men whose souls
Had struggled toward the light,
And with a larger hope and faith
Lit up the cheerless night.
This was religion growing, then,
As it must ever do,
Till not a cloud is left to hide
The light of heaven's blue,

And the true savior of mankind
Shall be held up to view, —
The love divine with power to save
The good, and evil too ;
With heaven for each and every one, —
Not by belief or creed,
But because a law most perfect
Doth provide for every need.

And with this truth then to cheer us,
Our Easter songs we sing, —
Glad anthems of thanksgiving
For the truths the angels bring.
Rejoice ! that every soul shall pass
From darkness unto light,
And passing from the mists of earth
Shall see and hear aright.

"ACROSS THE THRESHOLD."

[This was given as a subject for an improvisation at Norwich, Conn., by Mrs. Spalding. Instantly her spirit-daughter, a bright form encircled with light, appeared, and the following lines were given :]

" WHY did you come from out the silence, gliding
Across the threshold where the two worlds meet?
In that bright home where now you are residing
Is not all joy and happiness complete?

" Or is there in your soul some silent longing
Which finds no answer in your heavenly place,
That thus you join the heavenly hosts now thronging
The way to earth, its pathways to retrace? "

" Yes ! God has given me life and joy and gladness
In that bright world, my spirit-home above ;
But there 's to all a higher sense of duty,
And higher promptings toward the ones we love.

" So this is why I come across the threshold
To find the ones on earth I hold so dear,
And satisfy the longing, as I bless them,
I sometimes feel e'en in the higher sphere."

LIFE TRIUMPHANT.

[The following was given on the occasion of the funeral service
of William A. Dunklee, Boston, Mass., March 7, 1888 :]

WHILE his waiting spirit lingered,
Looking, he greeted the blest, —
Still waiting, the weary mortal,
To find his higher rest.

And the eye of the soul looked outward,
Catching the light from above,
Seeing the faces of those he knew
In the kingdom of light and love.

Triumphant at this hour
Over disease and the clay,
Triumphant by life's power
In this its closing day :

And as the soul looked outward,
And he viewed the realms of space,
He saw, I believe, his heaven
And the soul's abiding-place ;

He saw the loved ones coming ;
He extended the eager hand
To welcome the comers that waited
To bear him to Spirit-Land.

And though he looked with sorrow,
And e'en with a tear-dimmed eye
On the tearful, stricken ones of earth
Who silently waited by ;

Though he tenderly blessed his children,
Extending the outstretched hand
To caress a moment the waiting one,
Companion of earthly land, —

Still the eager hands reached outward,
And the beckoning forms from above
Called him too strongly to linger,
And he joined them in realms of love.

So this our message given,
We bow, since it must be,
Rejoicing that death was swallowed up
In the soul's great victory !



A POEM,

GIVEN IMPROMPTU AT THE CLOSE OF THE FUNERAL SER-
VICE FOR MRS. HOLLIS, OF ALSTON.

So now, as we look outward, friends,
We bid you rejoice to-day,
That while we look on the weary form,
The tired and worn-out clay,

While we watch for the silent spirit,
We know 't has been borne above,
Lifted up by the hands of angels,
The angels she learned to love.

While we wait just now at the portal,
Then look, as just for one view,
We behold the city immortal,
And see her passing through.

Then let our song of rejoicing
Mingle with those above ;
While extending the hand of welcome,
They lead to that home of love.

And while in our separation,
With her in the mortal form,
Let us rejoice that her spirit
Shall pass through no more storm,

No more beating waves of sadness
To sweep o'er her troubled life ;
Then only rejoice, dear husband,
For this thy spirit-wife.

Look upward, and know that although left
In thy loneliness to-day,
Though thy wife of the earth has risen,
And silently passed away,

Close by thy side is a spirit,
A radiant form of white,
Who places her hand upon thy brow,
And shows us the City of Light.

So the homes are thus united :
These are the rooms on earth ;
And as you 'd ascend this stairway,
She passed through the second birth, —

Has opened the door, or the portal,
That leads to the room above ;
And they met her with shining faces,
All reunited in love.



A POEM

GIVEN AT THE FUNERAL SERVICE FOR A SISTER OF MRS.
E. H. DUNHAM, PROVIDENCE, R. I.

So here we must leave thee, Rena,
Our sister of the earth ;
Thy spirit has been borne away
Through this the second birth.

We look upon the cold white brow,
And question for a while ;
Then look above, as I can now,
And see her angel smile.

She has arisen, then, through death,
And 's lifted thus above :
There we will live in realms of light,
Encircled by pure love, —

No more henceforth to be disturbed
By sorrows here below,
No more the heavy burdens
Of earthly life to know.

In fadeless flowers you've written,
In this your gift, her name,
Thanking the Giver of all Life
That to the earth she came.

Fulfilling, as her spirit could,
Life's promise given here,
Completes the rest, through angelhood,
In that, the higher sphere.

Lifting a hand and finger,
Pointing to worlds so bright,
I see her angel guardian
Who leads to God's own light.

So born again, the child of earth
Sails peacefully away,
Lifted by this, the second birth,
To rest and endless day.

THE CLOUDS.

[While watching the great banks of pink and white clouds as they assume such ever-varied forms toward sunset, the following lines were written:]

THE king of the clouds, do you see him,
Riding in on the winds from the sea?
He wears a white crown, light as eider-down,
And he's making up faces at me.

There's a funny old queen beside him,
And her robes are of sunset and gold;
A long veil sweeps behind, flung out by the wind,
And a sceptre her hand seems to hold.

You funny old couple of cloud-land,
What strange thoughts you're bringing to me!
For the queen's flown ahead, and the king's look of dread
Is at least very funny to see.

Now her form's all illumed with the sunlight,
And a look of such motherly grace,
While I fairly can see the king's love for thee,
As it lights up his homely old face.

Around them the cloudlets are moving,
And away from my vision they glide;
A change of the weather brings the two clouds together,
And they're standing there now side by side.

So an omen of good I call this,
To woman, whatever betide her,
That her crown, of pure gold, and sceptre she 'll hold,
As well as the king that 's beside her.



GIVE THANKS.

"Give thanks!" rang the proclamation
Through all the land so fair, —
"Turn from the busy marts a while,
Let's join in praise and prayer.
For all the blessings God bestowed
Upon his creatures here,
Let's reverently give our thanks,
Let all the people hear."

A table bountifully spread,
And friends assembled there :
"Give thanks," said the kind voice of one,
"For all our fathers' care !
Give thanks for wealth of the nation,
Give thanks for our daily bread,
Give thanks for bounty everywhere !"
The good old deacon said.

A poor old woman was helping,
Upon this extra day,

In this a home so richly blest,
Just for the extra pay.
Her face wore lines of bitterness,
And weary lines of care,
Which only the hard hand of Fate
And toil had painted there.

“ Well, I wish I could be thankful,”
We heard old Susan say,
“ I wish I did n’t feel hateful,
I wish my lips could pray !
I suppose folks feel like thanking
Who ’ve everything that ’s good ;
But what are such as me to do,
Who could n’t if they would ?

“ Whose hearts are full of wrath instead,
Who feel more like a curse, —
Who even wish that they might die,
Instead of something worse ? ”
“ Instead of something worse, granny ?
What worse thing could God give ? ”
“ Oh ! child, you don’t know what I mean :
It ’s a far sight worse to live.

“ Give thanks, give thanks for what ? I pray :
For all my toil and sorrow, —
Scarce knowing what ’s for me to-day,
Or what will be to-morrow ?

Oh, dear ! I could n't be thankful,"
Old Susan said once more,
And with an air of dignity
She swept out through the door.

Oh, poor old woman, you're not all !
I stood beside the sea
Upon Thanksgiving morn this year,
And there came up to me
Something such thoughts as you express,
And many another may,
Of how old Nature does her work
In her own wondrous way, —

Of how she wrings poor human hearts,
As though she did n't care
Whether they turned to bitterness,
Or turned their lips to prayer ;
For there upon the sandy shore
Lay many a human form, —
Hundreds went down the night before
'Mid wreckage of the storm.

And hundreds more are anxious,
With grief too great to bear,
Benumbed too much by suffering,
For either praise or prayer.
And so the wheels are moving
That grind out soon or late

All of our human destiny, —
The wheels of time and fate.

Time turns with a heavy pressure,
Fate with unerring power ;
Whichever the wheels bring uppermost, —
A human soul or flower.
A vessel storm-tossed and beaten,
Or wrecked in the waves of the sea,
With a thousand lives upon it,
Is counted as one with thee,

Thou Power of Life eternal,
Holding all things in hand,
As though it were only a speck or mote,
Or even a grain of sand !
Storm-tossed on many a billow,
Our human lives below, —
Each one with their weight of sorrow,
Each their burden of woe.

We fall and rise, we rise and fall,
The wheels go round and round ;
Sometimes in the depths of the wave,
Sometimes on the crest we're found.
But the dashing waves upon us
Of life's eventful sea
Are what work out for us at last
The soul's great destiny.

They will be uppermost, maybe,
Who now have toil and care ;
While they who now have their pleasure
Will yet their portion share
Of what the great hand of Nature
Sees fit in her way to give
Of the necessary lessons
That teach us how to live.

So for all we could be thankful,
Could we but read her laws,
Or sum up our life's chapter
From the Eternal Cause.
Give thanks for life eternal,
Thanks for pleasure and pain, —
Handmaidens of the higher law,
The soul's eternal gain !



BITTER-SWEET.

[Given impromptu at Berkeley Hall, Boston, Nov. 4, 1888, at close of the lecture entitled, "Our Foes Without and Within."]

THERE is a secret of Nature's laws,
That good from ill, as effect from cause,
Cometh at last perfect and complete ;
And so you have given us Bitter-Sweet.

From the depths of evil that we call sin,
Sometimes purifications begin, —
As in the depths of the mire and clay,
Closely embedded day after day,
Lives the white cup of the lily fair
In all its beauty and fragrance rare.
Catch up a handful of only the clay
Where the roots of the fairest lilies lay,
And you 'd never dream of the lustre white
That cometh from darkness up toward the light,
And never dream, in a world like this,
We held such a treasure of perfect bliss.
Out of the darkness of our earthly way
Comes all the good we possess to-day ;
And storms and tempests ever precede
The coming of something that fits our need.
This is God's law. It is perfect, complete,
And is what you mean by the " Bitter-Sweet."

Out of the depths of all Nature, then,
Ever there comes to the children of men
Better things than we think or dream ;
Better than now to our dull sense may seem, —
Yes, better e'en than through our dull eyes
We can ever see from the depths uprise.
But by and by give Nature her time,
And out of all evil grows good divine ;
Out of all darkness cometh the light ;
Under blackest clouds the lining of white ;

Out of the darkest and dreariest day
Something bright when the clouds have rolled away,
That makes the air seem with beauty replete —
That's what you mean by the Bitter-Sweet.

Thus through our life and its trying hours
Let us think of Nature's wonderful powers.
If one like Judas to-day we find,
Who proveth untrue, and strikes from behind,
We know just as sure as God still lives
That out of all such things good ones he gives.
He takes his own time and perfect way
To bring the lily from out the clay ;
He takes his own time and perfect power
To give the sweetness to every flower.
So we can see, laid richly in store,
Always some good that is just before.
We'll wait for all things in patience, friend,
Till we see the lights with the shadows blend,
And see with the bitter of every hour
That the secrets of Nature's subtle power
Are held by her in her beautiful hand, —
We shall read it sometime, and understand.

HOW JOHN NORTON SPENT HIS CHRISTMAS.

[The following lines were suggested on hearing read this beautiful and touching story :]

WE went one night to hear Murray —
Murray, the sinful man —
Tell how John Norton spent Christmas.
This was how he began :
“ I have been asked many times, friends,
Who John Norton might be,
Or where in my travels I found him,
To furnish this story for me.

“ Well, I ’m obliged to confess, then,
I have never seen him on earth ;
That in my fancy only
John Norton had his birth.
And so, as I had to make him,
I thought, when I began :
I might as well, while about it,
Make him a perfect man.

“ And then I could n’t help thinking,
Had God but worked that way,
The world would n’t be all zigzag
And out of sorts to-day ;

Had he, when he put together
 Material for the first,
 Left out the power of sinning,
 Which all the race has cursed,

“ And put in more of the virtues
 That in John Norton abound,
 And less of the human frailties
 Which in Wild Bill were found, —
 There 'd be fewer dreary hearthstones
 On which dead embers lay ;
 Fewer over-burdened women
 With husbands far away ;

“ Fewer babies crying with hunger,
 And shivering with the cold ;
 Less of that bitterness of heart
 Which never can be told ;
 Less need of good John Nortons
 To come on Christmas Day
 To start the fire upon the hearth
 And drive the wolf away.”

For how John Norton spent Christmas
 Did you hear Murray say ?
 Well loaded down with all good things
 Upon this Christmas Day,
 He started through the woods and snow
 With Wild Bill by his side,
 His well-filled box of Christmas gifts
 Full willing to divide.

And from his little store at home
 Added in goodly measure
 A little something of each kind
 To enrich the widow's treasure.
 'T was a practical kind of prayer
 For blessings on the poor ;
 And he who prays in this fashion
 Of answer may be sure.

And Wild Bill, you see, made willing
 His heavy load to share,
 By bounteous gifts bestowed on him,
 More powerful than prayer,
 Tugged on with a heart as earnest, —
 For his was good and true,
 Filled with these resolutions,
 Henceforth some good to do.

And trudging along, light-hearted,
 They reached the widow's door,
 To find that the last cold morsel
 Had been eaten the night before ;
 But soon they made things look cheerful,
 In their bright, happy way,
 Till soon the children were shouting,
 " Well, it is Christmas Day ! "

Murray, your story 's a good one,
 Full of thoughts rich and rare ;
 And I wondered if the good folks
 Who listened to you there

Could think the Infinite Maker
 Would be less wise than man,
 Or make an infinite blunder
 In his creative plan.

Why did n't he make man stronger,
 Or a better woman?
 Why did he make any Devil?
 Why did he make us human?
 Why did n't he put them, like Murray,
 Away off in the wood,
 Where the Devil could n't tempt them
 Away from being good?

I tell you, I don't believe this, —
 In Adam, the Devil, the Fall;
 The perfect pair in the garden,
 I don't believe at all!
 But Nature is still creating
 Out of the potter's clay;
 She works through infinite ages
 This the infinite way.

She moulds and changes and fashions,
 Passes us o'er this plane;
 Then takes the same material,
 And tries her hand again.
 It may be what we call "evil"
 Is the lever, you know,
 In the great polishing process,
 And "pain" the hammer's blow.

It may be tears are the crystals
That first appear in view,
Before the rays of the diamond
Polished are shining through ;
It may be God the creator
Has n't finished us yet, —
He 'll make as good as John Norton
Before he gets through, " I 'll bet ! "



A VISION FOR LUNA.

[In order that the figures of speech in the following poem may be fully understood, it is necessary to say that Mrs. D., being a medium, has a child-control called Sunlight. It is customary with this spirit to give symbolic names to her earth friends. She called her medium Luna. She gave Mr. D., long before he passed away, the name of Palm-Tree. The spirit giving the poem, subscribing herself Celeste, is one familiar with Mr. and Mrs. D., and one whose name he spoke, looking up and apparently recognizing her, just before his spirit took its flight.]

HIGH o'er the earth the crescent moon
Threw forth its silvery light
Upon the bosom of a lake,
Touching its waves with white.
No cloud appeared upon the blue
Within the vault above, —
A scene as old, yet ever new,
As is the gift of love.

Beside me stood a tall palm-tree,
With branches waving high,
As if to meet the silvery moon,
Which watched with faithful eye
Above the palm-tree's branches,
Above the lake and wood, —
As though an angel of pure light
Who saw, and understood.

And as I gazed, my vision
By mist seemed overspread,
Until I could not see the palm
With tall, majestic head.
I rubbed my eyes and looked again ;
And over Luna's face
A shadow and the mist had crept,
Hiding its queenly grace.

“ Fair daughter of the earth, I bring
To you this little dream ;
No fancy, or an idle thought,
But real will it seem.
You know the silver rays of moon,
You saw the lighted earth ;
Within your breast the calm, blue lake
Of peace had had its birth.

“ Beside you stood the waving Palm,
Of all within the view
It was the grandest and the best, —
A tower of strength to you !

You saw no clouds within the sky,
No danger could you trace,
Till suddenly they hid the tree,
And covered Luna's face !

“ The earth grew dim, then densely dark :
Night of your life had come ;
O'er the bright scene of eventide
Had settled deepest gloom !
But there 's no night without its day,
No eve but has its morn !
So, out of all your sadness
Slowly is being born

“ A consciousness within your soul
Of compensation given, —
Slowly, we say, as comes the day,
Or comes the tide at even !
By promises that we have made,
And slowly bring to view,
We lift the veil from off your face,
And bring your own to you.

“ We help the clouds to roll away
Which veiled the moon so bright,
And slowly merging into day
Give you once more Sunlight !
Cheer up ! no more be sorrowful,
For I am by your side ;
No distance great, no night of death,
Can our two souls divide.

“ Cheer up ! and let the light of hope
Now mingle with your tears
For all the pictures fair and bright
That fill your sixty years.
And wheresoe’er your footsteps tread,
Be this for ever known, —
Angels are with you everywhere,
You shall not walk alone !

“ And when the mystic power of life
That we have misnamed death
Shall touch the outer form of clay
With its cold, icy breath,
You ’ll see the living field of green,
You ’ll see the lake so white,
You ’ll see the Palm-Tree standing by,
Just as he does to-night.

“ For this poor mortal vision,
And mists that hang above,
Are all that hide the faces
Of those we dearly love ;
Blessings, then, pure and many,
Be in your earthly place,
Until the clouds all roll away
Which cover Luna’s face.”

WHAT IS IT?

ONE day as I was walking through
A garden full of green,
I saw the fairest of all flowers
Which I had ever seen.
It had no stem on which it grew,
It had no leaf at all ;
It had no cup of honey-sweet
In which the dew might fall.

Its fragrance was the sweetest far
Of all the flowers of earth.
This flower, which I had met below,
Had had in heaven its birth.
It had no form which could be seen,
Save by the fragrance shed ;
It was not of the purest white,
It was not blue or red.

Of all the colors which are blent
Within the rainbow's light,
Each should be richer, deeper far,
The white should be more white.
The forms of air and ether too,
Were each of these combined,
Would fail to give the graceful form
Which in this flower I find.

In fact it was not visible
To mortal eyes of earth ;
And they who see this flower of light
Must, too, have heavenly birth.
And yet it is for every one
A secret born within, —
Its fragrance is the living power
Which saves a soul from sin.

Guess what this fragrant flower of earth,
Yet born with God above ;
Guess what the stem on which it grows,
And thus your wisdom prove.
Go through the gardens of our earth,
Go through the Summer-Land,
Go 'mong the lowly haunts of men,
And you may understand.

Its fragrance is the sweetest
Caught from an infant's breath ;
We quaff the longest, deepest draught
When comes the angel death.
Guess what this flower is, will you ?
Search far below, above ;
And when we touch our lips, like this,
You 'll whisper, " It is *Love*."

BARKING.

WHEN on the express one morning,
Whirled by the power of steam
By village, mountain, and wild-wood,
Meadow and laughing stream, —

Until it seemed we were rushing,
With all our power and might :
Each object a moment with us,
Then left far out of sight, —

There rushed from out a farm-house
A little black-and-tan,
Who came snapping, snarling, and barking
As only small curs can.

He seemed to think he could stop us,
Or else to turn us back,
Or barking was the proper thing
To throw us off the track.

O little fellow ! you 've reckoned
This time "without your host ;"
Or if you get too near us,
You have n't counted the cost.

But then, you are not more reckless
Than many a man I know,
Who looks at the train of progress
And hates to see it go ;

And when determined to stop it,
Doing the most he can,
Can only run and bark at it,
As did the black-and-tan.



DREAMING.

Of all the fondest, fairest dreams
Which e'er were given birth,
There 's one I've held in fancy oft
While journeying on earth.

It seemed a fairy tale to me,
So beautiful and bright,
Yet, as a fairy vision will,
It vanished from my sight.

APRIL FOOL.

Do you remember long ago,
When we were little folks, you know,
That once a year came All Fool's Day,
When each one tried some trick to play?

Our breakfast plate or cup, no doubt,
Had mischief lurking round about,
And some one bubbling, full of glee,
To see what great fools we could be.

And then the shout that followed after,
When all hands joinèd in the laughter !
How green we felt when they, so cool,
Had said, "Oh, you 're an April fool !"

Well, times are much the same to-day
As when we children were at play,
And Mother Nature even will,
I fancy, stoop to fool us still ;

For Sunday morning, Easter Day,
The sun gave us its brightest ray,
And everything below, above,
Breathed forth a spirit of pure love.

Without a single thought or dream
That things are not all what they seem ;
Without a single fear or doubt,
We donned our best and started out.

“ Oh, I ’m so glad that spring has come ! ”
And “ I ’m so glad that winter ’s gone ! ”
Old Winter, unseen standing near,
Such words as these had chanced to hear.”

Said he, “ Now this is All Fool’s Day :
I guess a trick on them I ’ll play.”
He waited round till set of sun,
Then started in to have some fun.

Said he, “ The ladies now, I ’ll bet,
Would hate to get their good clothes wet ; ”
And then, with a good-natured smile,
Said he, “ I ’ll let it rain a while.”

Then called his biggest flakes of snow,
Untied their wings, and let them go ;
Then caught the lady’s Easter bonnet,
And sifted a whole handful on it.

Then said, “ I guess before I ’ve done
I ’ll crown her bustle, just for fun ; ”
Then, laughing at the thought of that,
He spied a man with high silk hat ;

Flew after him with all his might,
And left the hat a perfect sight, —
In fact he filled the very air
With clouds of snow-flakes everywhere,

And seemed to do all in a minute,
As though the very Nick were in it ;
And then said, laughing in the air,
“ What April fools you mortals are ! ”



NEW FRIENDS.

[An impromptu poem given at an opening address at the Oakland, Cal., Camp-Meeting, Sunday evening, June 3, 1888. Subject furnished by the audience.]

YES, these are all new faces,
As I look on them now ;
Yet in these pleasant places
I seem to know, somehow,
That they are quite like old friends :
We 've met them all before.
Where was it? — thus I come to you, —
Was it some distant shore
Where spirits meet as spirits,
And none e'er walk alone,
And where veils are uplifted,
And we know as we are known?

Was it thus through some strange power
Of friendship we are kin ;
Or is 't that the present hour
The veil has grown so thin
That soul to soul immortal,
As brothers, sisters, here,
Looking to that one centre
Out in the spirit-sphere,
We realize we are akin,
Our origin the same ;
Though strangers, feel we are as friends,
And strangers but in name ?

And we extend our greeting,
As you have given here,
And feel there are no strangers,
But each a friend held dear.
A kindlier, loving welcome
I would not ask to find,
Or generous, all-embracing
Outflowing of the mind
Than has to us been given
Here in our tent to-day,
Since finding home among you,
As strangers by the way.

And we have felt your hand-clasps, —
The hand-clasps warm with love.
It bore our fainting spirits
On wings of Light above.

There is a kinship and a bond
Unites us all as one ;
And may we, heart to heart,
Work on until our task is done.



CHILDREN'S DAY POEM.

[An impromptu poem given on Children's Day at the Oakland,
Cal., Camp-Meeting, June 22, 1888.]

I DON'T want to be big to-day,
I want to be one of these,
And throw off all my dignity,
And do just as I feel and please.

I want to go back to childhood,
And stand there with you to-day ;
I want some ice-cream and some cake,
I want to go back to my play.

I want to take you by the hand,
And say we are girls and boys ;
I want to forget my tears and cares,
I want to help make a noise.

Let 's shout and sing as loud as we can,
Each girl and each boy here,
Forget there are grown women or men,
Be full of gladness and cheer.

Each girl and boy with smiling face,
I want to be little and have a place
Among you, and look up once more
In somebody's face, as I have before,

As you look on each father here,
Or into mother's face so dear ;
Remember they were little like you,
Boys and girls with eyes as blue.

Oh ! could I take you in these arms,
And show the angel-world your charms, —
But I need not do it, even for now,
While I look on each little brow,

I see a hand as white and fair
Come from the bright world over there ;
Do you know it, my children dear ? —
Heaven is with us now and here.

It is n't ever so far away, —
We bear it with us every day.
And the good people here and now
Have made you happy, you know how, —

Giving you something you love so well,
Pretty stories they love to tell,
Songs they sing, and beauty they trace,
As they look in each little face.

Why, this makes heaven anywhere, —
Well as with angels over there ;
You are with angels every day, —
Mamma's an angel on life's way ;

So is papa. I tell you so,
For fear, little ones, you may not know ;
When you look in their faces to-night,
Shining with all its love so bright,

Say, "You're an angel, they told me so."
You need n't wait for wings to grow ;
For wings of love and mother-care
Are like the wings that angels wear.

And I thought for a little while
I'd come back in the good old style,
And be a child again at play,
And be little with you to-day.

I wish I could for a single minute,
It seems to me there'd be a world in it ;
I'd be youthful and grow in grace,
If but a moment in that place.

Be as happy as dear ones can ;
Don't think too much of being a man ;
Ah ! don't hurry a woman to be :
The fairest sight on earth to me

Is such a sight as I see now,
With every little upturned brow,
Eager expression on each face,
With which only the good I trace.

You are God's children, every one,
And by and by, when the work is done,
We 'll have a play-day over there,
With fields all bright and flowers so fair.

We 'll be at home in the Summer-Land —
I wonder if you understand ;
Do you know where that land may be ?
'T is where the loved are you do not see.

You 've heard them whisper at home and say :
" They 've left us here, they have passed away ;
They live in a land that 's fair and free, —
It 's just beyond where our eyes can see.

" It is a place that is ruled by love;
We call it the Summer-Land above."
Our earth should be a summer-land,
Heaven always be near at hand.

Let 's say we 'll live it all the while,
We shall never scowl, but always smile ;
We 'll do just as we do to-day, —
Drive out care, and all of us play.

MOTHER, HOME, AND HEAVEN.

[Given impromptu at the Oakland, Cal., Camp-Meeting, June, 1888. Subject from the audience.]

SHALL we e'er forget thee, mother?

No ; that name more than all

Comes up to us from the many

Who often upon us call.

Tell me of home and mother

Now, upon this bright day,

That I may turn back to childhood

When a little one at play.

Go with me, each of you earth-friends,

Lay off your burden of care,

Leave in the distance a moment

Each wrinkle and each gray hair,

And in your thought go with me a while,

For a moment with old-time grace ;

Be children again with youthful smile,

Look back to a loving face.

Then we shall see her there once more,

Just as she used to be,

Coming back from the closed door,

Which seemed of eternity.

Memory holds her in its power,
Cherished and bright and fair :
We see her as in our childhood's hour,
Almost unburdened of care.

Let's rest a moment and leave our load,
Our weary burden, once more ;
It will give us strength along life's road
For the struggles that lie before.

Then in the home which we see there,
Mother-lighted with holy grace,
Though it may be poor and humble and bare,
She made it earth's fairest place.

Not till we stand in the upper home,
In all its heavenly light,
Out of this into the higher grown,
Shall we see her face so bright.

Then, until then, we shall never know,
Walk where we may, with eager feet,
What mother, home, and heaven bestowed,
Till time and eternity meet.

Then, until then, we shall miss e'erwhere,
In its old accustomed place,
Our mother's form in the old arm-chair,
With love-illuminated face.

But by and by, in the land above, —
A gift the future holds in store, —
Are heaven and home and mother-love :
These will be ours in the evermore.



FAREWELL.

[Impromptu poem given at the closing meeting of the Oakland, Cal., Camp-Meeting. Numerous flower-pieces decorated the rostrum, among which was a "Gates Ajar" made of golden-colored flowers surmounted by a star.]

LET us for a moment longer
Leave our blessings for the day, —
Leave them within your Golden Gate,
Though we must go away.

May the star of light and beauty
That hangs o'er the symbol fair
Be in your presence, and its power
A blessing everywhere.

May the star of love you cherish,
And of beauty, all combined
Throw a radiance o'er your pathway
Which shall cheer the troubled mind.

And as the gates swing open
On their hinges here to-night,
In a symbol of such beauty,
Ever golden, fair, and bright, —

So, some angel hand extended
 That you have known in days before,
 Some one who has e'er befriended,
 Meet you on the other shore.

And as now our hands extending,
 We must say to you "Good by!"
 May the dear ones now befriending
 Ever with their presence nigh,

Guard, keep, embrace, and love you,
 While tenderly they wait
 Until they pass on with you
 Through death, — life's golden gate.



TO MR. AND MRS. J. J. OWEN.

[The following lines were written in a letter to Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Owen, of the Golden Gate, whose kindness and hospitality we shall long remember with that of many others.]

AND while the waters of the one
 Play softly at your feet,
 And with their lowly cadences
 Softly soothe you to your sleep,

We find ourselves at home again
 Upon this other shore,
 Lulled by the deeper monotone
 Of old Atlantic's roar.

Thought by its subtle potency
Spans all the way between,
And makes the long weeks that have passed
As though they had not been.

I stand once more among you there,
And see your faces bright ;
There is no distance and no space, —
We 're with you there to-night.

The candles burn and are not dim,
The flowers are fresh and fair ;
Preserved by power of memory,
Is all their fragrance rare.

And I shall often stand as now
Under the same blue sky,
And hear the words of welcoming,
Though many years roll by.

For these are ours, and will not fade,
Long as the mind recalls
The pictures bright of scenes so fair
That hang on memory's walls.

OUR MOTHER.

'T WAS long, long ago, when the earth was new,
And everything bright around her,
In a beautiful spot, where bright flowers grew,
'T is said that the Devil found her.
Now into that garden so bright and so fair,
Which God had made to receive her,
Would you have thought that the Devil could climb,
Or find his way through to deceive her?

But he must have done, — the Bible says so, —
Else how should we've had the story
Of a deed which covered our earth with woe,
And robbed a God of such glory?
She must have been busy, — she'd just moved in,
With so much to take her attention :
She'd the new home to keep in good order,
And duties too numerous to mention.

Adam, you know, she'd only just met him, —
They two were almost as strangers ;
She must be agreeable, him to please, —
Marriage has so many dangers.
No doubt she'd turned it all o'er in her mind,
In a woman's practical way,
Expecting to be so gentle and kind,
This dear little wife of a day.

One day when dusting the par — oh, no !
The velvety grass for a seat,
She started, surprised, and then would have flown ;
But a musical voice, low and sweet,
Beguiling, persuasive, gentle, and kind
(Her first call since God went away),
Bade her in low accents to “have no fear,”
He ’d something important to say.

So they sat on the green turf together,
And I fancy the Devil’s smile
As he chatted perhaps of the weather,
And commonplace things for a while.
He, feigning indifference to what he ’d to give,
Perhaps asked if Adam was in, —
Approaching her in a roundabout way,
Scarce knowing just how to begin.

And then as of course she ’d just come there,
He could ask, with a devil’s own grace,
Was she happy, contented, and was she
At home and in love with the place ;
Had she ate of the fruit ; had she tasted
At least of that wonderful tree ?
Side by side then together they hasted,
That they its full beauties might see.

There it stood in the midst of the garden,
The fairest of all to behold ;
And the Devil then said that its virtues,
To know, must be tasted, not told.

To Eve's remonstrance he said, "Never mind."
And then, with a wink of his eye,
"Just taste of the fruit, and I promise you,
Indeed you shall not surely die."

'T is done ; Eve tasted, and found it was good,
Smacked her lips, and said it was nice ;
And then — just as God must have known she would —
Of course she gave Adam a slice.
Woe, woe ! They say here our trouble began,
That God looked on woman and frowned,
That he cursed her, the serpent, and Adam,
The first time he wandered around.

Adam, poor soul, should henceforth earn his bread
Through toil and the sweat of his brow ;
While the serpent should crawl, no more to walk, —
Well, I never could tell you how ;
And in sorrow should *we* bear our children, —
Oh, this was a terrible curse !
Had she eaten the whole tree of knowledge,
It could n't have been any worse.

Of course God made her, and he must have known
The material that he gave her.
Why did n't he make the fence devil-proof,
Or stay there himself but to save her ?
But in walked the Devil and talked with her there, —
Oh ! why was n't Adam on hand ?
No, he could just eat the apple she gave,
And then let the whole race be d — d.

O poor Mother Eve ! if the story is true,
Woman ne'er will o'ercome her disgrace.
I suppose we shall ne'er be forgiven,
Though we mother the whole of the race ;
Though we mother the gods, as did Mary,
The Washingtons, Lincolns, and all,
I suppose they will never forgive us
For the apple you ate at the Fall.



SOMETHING TO EAT.

WHILE sitting beside my window one day,
I heard a low chirping which seemed to say,
 "Tweet, tweet !
 Something to eat !"

'T is the same with mortals as birds, I said ;
The cry of the earth is the cry for bread.
 Tweet, tweet !
 Something to eat !

A rumble and roar, a whirl and a flutter,
While some cry for bread, others want butter.
 Tweet, tweet !
 Something to eat !

Listen a while ; it's growing so funny, —
Some can't eat this unless they have honey.
 Tweet, tweet !
 Something to eat !

None are content with what they have yet ;
What they have not, they 're determined to get !

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat !

They struggle and fight till the race is o'er, —
They 'd do just the same if they 'd millions more !

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat ! - .

The bird standing high on the limb of a tree
Dropped a worm it had caught, to get something
from me.

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat !

The crumb the wind caught and blew into the dust ;
The worm crawled away, as I knew it must.

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat !

Whate'er you do, keep the good that 's now yours, —
Your meal for the present at least it insures.

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat !

Forget not this, as you 're reaching higher :
You may o'erlook some sweets hanging nigher.

Tweet, tweet !
Something to eat !

SONG TO THE MOUNTAINS.

[All who in passing through the Rocky Mountains, on their way to the Pacific, have witnessed a thunder-storm, or seen the gorgeous sunsets among those snow summits, will understand the emotions expressed in the following poem.]

STAND high, O ye towering mountains !
Lie low, O ye valleys so green !
Shine in your resplendence, ye sunsets, —
None fairer the earth has e'er seen, —

As you catch up the mists from the valleys,
Like a veil o'er the mountain's face thrown ;
While you give it a touch of the beauty
And "glory-light " caught from your own !

Or lifting the cloud-veil a moment,
Roll it up from the mountain's height,
And touch all the peaks with your splendor,
As if you were kissing good night !

Break forth in deep tones, O ye thunders
That up through the grand cañons roar
Till the mountains catch up the music,
And echo it o'er and still o'er ! —

An anthem of infinite praises
From Nature, whose pent-up desires
Roll forth and resound through these organs,
Preceding her infinite choirs.

Then more and more distant the echoes,
Till they murmur in cadences sweet,
While we stand by the snow-covered mountain,
And gather a rose at its feet.

Uncover your heads then in silence,
In presence of all that's divine,
And join in the unworded worship
Where Nature has builded a shrine.



DEATH.

DEDICATED TO IDA.

DEATH is to be drifting thither
Into a wonderful sea, —
A sense of scarce knowing whether
'T is "To be, or not to be!"

Death is the giving up of what
We've loved and treasured for years, —
Yielding, whether we would or not,
With a sigh and parting tears.

Death's a mystical white-sailed boat
Which drifts up close to our side ;
Entering soon, we are afloat,
Borne by the strength of the tide.

Death is the white-capped waves that bear
Our barque out over this sea,
Landing it safely "over there," —
In the realm of eternity.

Death's a beautiful white-winged dove,
With an olive-branch of peace ;
Death's a white-robed angel of love
That giveth the soul release !

Death is a change that's held in store
For mortals walking here, —
'T is passing through an open door
To Life's eternal sphere.

Death changes matter for the might
Of spirit and its power ;
Lifts up the cloud, lets in the light,
In this mysterious hour.

Death is the hand at last reveals,
Through its mysterious ways,
The splendor which the mist conceals
From our poor mortal gaze.

Death leads us like an angel fair
Out through Life's golden portal,
And crowns us, through his loving care,
With crowns of life immortal !

Death wipes the tears from every face,
Hushes the tired spirit,
And gives us in that heavenly place
The soul's "reward of merit."



CHARITY.

I saw a white-winged angel
Come to the earth one day,
And through the busy haunts of men
I saw her wend her way.

She passed her hand above their brows :
Where'er she did, each face
Seemed touched with tender radiance
Brought from her heavenly place.

She left her gentle influence
Upon the obdurate mind ;
She touched the hardened hearts of men,
And they grew strangely kind.

I wondered who this angel was ;
But very soon could see,
For where her influence was felt
They practised charity.

O white-winged angel, Charity !
Return to earth to-day,
And make us feel the brotherhood
Of all humanity.

One mortal has his weaknesses,
Another has his sin ;
And while we see our brother's faults,
We fail to look within.

'T is well for us — at times, at least —
To take reflection's glass,
And look upon our words and deeds
Before we let them pass ;

And we may find for charity
Enough to do at home,
Before 't is best for us, perhaps,
In other fields to roam.

The justice which we then shall mete
Unto our erring brother
We'll temper with that charity
We should give one another.

O white-winged angel, Charity !
Come to the earth again ;
Walk thou through all its crowded ways,
And touch the souls of men.

Inspire within them noble thoughts,
And noble deeds as well ;
Lift them to manhood's high estate,
Where henceforth they may dwell.

Then touch our sister, woman, too
With thy white angel hand :
Bid her by her convictions true,
Ever to firmly stand ;

To assist her sister woman
Who lives in sin below, —
Uplift her soul, give her the truth,
That she may wiser grow.

Lead us at last, O angel ! then
One family to be,
United by the twofold bond
Of love and charity.



GLORIA IN EXCELSIS.

SING anthems of praise and thanksgiving
For the light that is ours to-day, —
It stilleth our doubts by the knowledge
It giveth of " life and the way."

Through angels once more at the portal,
Who 've opened the door of the prison,
We hear the message : " They whom ye seek
Are not here, your dead have arisen."

To the mourning Marys who 're seeking
Their dead at the break of day
They show but the sepulchre open,
And the heavy stone rolled away ;

And say, " They 've but just gone before you,
And with you on earth will yet be ;"
As was said to the Marys of Jesus,
" You will find him in Galilee."

Then up from the tombs where we thought them,
To the life they are living to-day !
We shall hear, if we list to their voices :
" For lo ! I am with you alway."

Then sing a loud anthem of praises
To those who have conquered death's might,
And for the dim, dark, and uncertain,
Have brought us love, wisdom, and light.

